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# POEMS,

BY

1545

WILLIAM COWPER,

Of the Inner Temple, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Sicut aquæ tremulum labris ubi lumen ahenis  
Sole repercussum, aut radiantis imagine lunæ,  
Omnia pervolitat late loca, jamque sub auras  
Erigitur, summique ferit laquearia tecti.

*Virg. Æn. viii.*

So water, trembling in a polished vase,  
Reflects the beam that plays upon its face;  
The sportive light, uncertain where it falls,  
Now strikes the roof, now flashes on the walls.

A NEW EDITION.

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# P R E F A C E

TO THE

## FIRST VOLUME.

WHEN an Author, by appearing in print, requests an audience of the Public, and is upon the point of speaking for himself, whoever presumes to step before him with a preface, and to say, "Nay, but hear me first;" should have something worthy of attention to offer, or he will be justly deemed officious and impertinent. The judicious reader has probably, upon other occasions, been beforehand with me in this reflection: and I am not very willing it should now be applied to me, however I may seem to expose myself to the danger of it. But the thought of having my own name perpetuated in connexion with the name in the title page, is so pleasing and flattering to

the feelings of my heart, that I am content to risk something for the gratification.

This Preface is not designed to commend the Poems, to which it is prefixed. My testimony would be insufficient for those, who are not qualified to judge properly for themselves, and unnecessary to those, who are. Besides, the reasons, which render it improper and unseemly for a man to celebrate his own performances, or those of his nearest relatives, will have some influence in suppressing much of what he might otherwise wish to say in favour of a *friend*, when that friend is indeed an *alter idem*, and excites almost the same emotions of sensibility and affection, as he feels for himself.

It is very probable these Poems may come into the hands of some persons, in whom the sight of the author's name will awaken a recollection of incidents and scenes, which through length of time they had almost forgotten. They will be reminded of *one*, who was once the companion of their chosen hours, and who set out with them in early life in the paths, which lead to literary honours, to influence and affluence, with equal prospects of success. But he was suddenly and powerfully withdrawn from those pursuits, and



he left them without regret; yet not till he had sufficient opportunity of counting the cost, and of knowing the value of what he gave up. If happiness could have been found in classical attainments, in an elegant taste, in the exertions of wit, fancy, and genius, and in the esteem and converse of such persons, as in these respects were most congenial with himself, he would have been happy. But he was not—He wondered (as thousands in a similar situation still do) that he should continue dissatisfied, with all the means apparently conducive to satisfaction within his reach.—But in due time the cause of his disappointment was discovered to him—He had lived without God in the world. In a memorable hour the wisdom which is from above visited his heart. Then he felt himself a wanderer, and then he found a guide. Upon this change of views, a change of plan and conduct followed of course. When he saw the *busy* and the *gay* world in its true light, he left it with as little reluctance as a prisoner, when called to liberty, leaves his dungeon. Not that he became a Cynic or an Affectie—A heart filled with love to God, will assuredly breathe benevolence to men. But the turn of his temper inclining him to rural life, he indulged it, and the providence of God evidently preparing his way and marking out his retreat,

he retired into the country. By these steps the good hand of God, unknown to me, was providing for me one of the principal blessings of my life; a friend and a counsellor, in whose company for almost seven years, though we were seldom seven successive waking hours separated, I always found new pleasure. A friend, who was not only a comfort to myself, but a blessing to the affectionate poor people, among whom I then lived.

Some time after inclination had thus removed him from the hurry and bustle of life, he was still more secluded by a long indisposition, and my pleasure was succeeded by a proportionable degree of anxiety and concern. But a hope, that the God whom he served would support him under his affliction, and at length vouchsafe him a happy deliverance, never forsook me. The desirable crisis, I trust, is now nearly approaching. The dawn, the presage of returning day, is already arrived. He is again enabled to resume his pen, and some of the first fruits of his recovery are here presented to the public. In his principal subjects, the same acumen which distinguished him in the early period of life, is happily employed in illustrating and enforcing the truths, of which he received such deep and

unalterable impressions in his maturer years. His satire, if it may be called so, is benevolent, (like the operations of the skilful and humane surgeon, who wounds only to heal) dictated by a just regard for the honour of God, and indignant grief excited by the profligacy of the age, and a tender compassion for the souls of men.

His favourite topics are least insisted on in the piece entitled Table Talk; which therefore, with some regard to the prevailing taste, and that those, who are governed by it, may not be discouraged at the very threshold from proceeding farther, is placed first. In most of the larger Poems which follow, his leading design is more explicitly avowed and pursued. He aims to communicate his own perceptions of the truth, beauty, and influence of the religion of the Bible—A religion, which, however discredited by the misconduct of many, who have not renounced the Christian name, proves itself, when rightly understood, and cordially embraced, to be the grand *desideratum*, which alone can relieve the mind of man from painful and unavoidable anxieties, inspire it with stable peace and solid hope, and furnish those motives and prospects, which, in the present state of things, are absolutely ne-



cessary to produce a conduct worthy of a rational creature, distinguished by a vastness of capacity, which no assemblage of earthly good can satisfy, and by a principle and pre-intimation of immortality.

At a time when hypothesis and conjecture in philosophy are so justly exploded, and little is considered as deserving the name of knowledge, which will not stand the test of experiment, the very use of the term *experimental* in religious concerns, is by too many unhappily rejected with disgust. But we well know, that they, who affect to despise the inward feelings, which religious persons speak of, and to treat them as enthusiasm and folly, have inward feelings of their own, which, though they would, they cannot suppress. We have been too long in the secret ourselves to account the proud, the ambitious, or the voluptuous, happy. We must lose the remembrance of what we once were, before we can believe, that a man is satisfied with himself, merely because he endeavours to appear so. A smile upon the face is often but a mask worn occasionally and in company, to prevent, if possible, a suspicion of what at the same time is passing in the heart. We know that there



are people, who seldom smile when they are alone, who therefore are glad to hide themselves in a throng from the violence of their own reflections; and who, while by their looks and their language they wish to persuade us they are happy, would be glad to change their conditions with a dog. But in defiance of all their efforts they continue to think, forebode, and tremble. This we know, for it has been our own state, and therefore we know how to commiserate it in others.—From this state the Bible relieved us—When we were led to read it with attention, we found *ourselves* described.—We learnt the causes of our inquietude—we were directed to a method of relief—we tried, and we were not disappointed.

*Deus nobis hæc otia fecit.*

We are now certain that the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth. It has reconciled us to God, and to ourselves, to our duty, and our situation. It is the balm and cordial of the present life, and a sovereign antidote against the fear of death.

*Sed hætenus hæc.* Some smaller pieces upon less important subjects close the volume. Not

one of them, I believe, was written with a view to publication, but I was unwilling they should be omitted;

JOHN NEWTON.

Charles Square, Hoxton, .

February 15, 1782..

# CONTENTS.

	Page.
TABLE TALK .....	1
Progress of Error .....	35
Truth. ....	68
Exposition .....	89
Hope .....	121
Charity .....	155
Conversation .....	183
Retirement .....	222
The Yearly Distress, or Tithing Time at Stock in Essex .....	257
Sonnet to Henry Cowper, Esq. ....	261
Lines addressed to Dr. Darwin .....	262
On Mrs. Montague's Feather Hangings: .....	263
Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Sel- kirk, during his Abode in the Island of Juan Fernandez. ....	266
On the Promotion of Edward Thurlow, Esq. to the Chancellorship of England .....	269
Ode to Peace .....	270
Human Frailty .....	272
The Modern Patriot .....	273
On observing some Names of little Note recorded in the Biographia Britannica .....	275
Report of an adjudged Case, not to be found in any of the Books .....	276
On the burning of Lord Mansfield's Library. .	278
On the same .....	279
The Love of the World reprov'd .....	280
On the Death of Lady Throckmorton's Bulfinch	282

# CONTENTS.

	Page.
<i>The Rose</i> .....	286
<i>The Doves</i> .....	287
<i>A Fable</i> .....	289
<i>A Comparifon</i> .....	291
<i>Another, addreffed to a young Lady</i> .....	292
<i>The Poet's New Year's Gift</i> .....	293
<i>Ode to Apollo</i> .....	294
<i>Pairing Time anticipated, a Fable</i> .....	296
<i>The Dog and the Water-Lily</i> .....	299
<i>The Poet, the Oyfter, and the Sensitive Plant</i> ..	302
<i>The Shrubbery</i> .....	305
<i>The Winter Noſegay</i> .....	307
<i>Mutual Forbearance neceſſary to the Happineſs of the Married State</i> .....	308
<i>The Negro's Complaint</i> .....	311
<i>Pity for poor Africans</i> .....	314
<i>The Morning Dream</i> .....	317
<i>The Nightingale and Glow-worm</i> .....	320
<i>On a Goldfinch ſtarved to Death in his Cage</i> ..	322
<i>The Pine-Apple and the Bee</i> .....	323
<i>Horace, Book the 2d, Ode the 10th</i> .....	325
<i>A Reflection on the foregoing Ode</i> .....	327
<i>The Lily and the Roſe</i> .....	328
<i>Idem Latine Redditum</i> .....	330
<i>The Poplar Field</i> .....	331
<i>Idem Latine Redditum</i> .....	333
<i>Votum</i> .....	334
<i>Translations from Vincent Bourne</i> .....	336
<i>Translation of Prior's Chloë and Euphelia</i> ....	349
<i>The Hiſtory of John Gilpin</i> .....	350
<i>Epistle to a Proteſtant Lady in France</i> .....	364
<i>To the Rev. W. C. Unwin</i> .....	367



## TABLE TALK.

*Si te fortè meæ gravis uret sarcina chartæ,  
Abjicito.———* HOR. Lib. I. Epist. 13.

A. You told me, I remember, glory, built  
On selfish principles, is shame and guilt;  
The deeds, that men admire as half divine,  
Stark naught, because corrupt in their design.  
Strange doctrine this! that without scruple tears  
The laurel, that the very lightning spares;  
Brings down the warrior's trophy to the dust,  
And eats into his bloody sword like rust.

B. I grant that, men continuing what they are,  
Fierce, avaricious, proud, there must be war.  
And never meant the rule should be applied  
To him, that fights with justice on his side.

Let laurels, drenched in pure Parnassian dews,  
Reward his memory, dear to every muse,  
Who, with a courage of unshaken root,  
In honour's field advancing his firm foot,  
Plants it upon the line that justice draws,  
And will prevail or perish in her cause.

'Tis to the virtues of such men, man owes  
His portion in the good, that heaven bestows.  
And when recording history displays  
Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days,  
Tells of a few stout hearts, that fought and died  
Where duty placed them, at their country's side;  
The man, that is not moved with what he reads,  
That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,  
Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,  
Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.

But let eternal infamy pursue  
The wretch to nought but his ambition true,  
Who, for the sake of filling with one blast  
The post-horns of all Europe, lays her waste.  
Think yourself stationed on a towering rock,  
, To see a people scattered like a flock,  
Some royal mastiff panting at their heels,  
With all the savage thirst a tyger feels;

Then view him self-proclaimed in a gazette  
Chief monster, that has plagued the nations yet:  
The globe and sceptre in such hands misplaced,  
Those ensigns of dominion, how disgraced!  
The glass, that bids man mark the fleeting hour,  
And death's own scythe would better speak his  
power;

Then grace the bony phantom in their stead  
With the king's shoulder-knot and gay cockade;  
Clothe the twin brethren in each other's drefs,  
The same their occupation and success.

A. 'Tis your belief the world was made for man;  
Kings do but reason on the self-same plan:  
Maintaining your's, you cannot their's condemn,  
Who think, or seem to think, man made for them.

B. Seldom, alas! the power of logic reigns  
With much sufficiency in royal brains;  
Such reasoning falls like an inverted cone,  
Wanting its proper base to stand upon.  
Man made for kings! those optics are but dim,  
That tell you so—say, rather, they for him.  
That were indeed a king-ennobling thought,  
Could they, or would they, reason as they ought.

The diadem, with mighty projects lined  
To catch renown by ruining mankind,  
Is worth, with all its gold and glittering store,  
Just what the toy will sell for, and no more.

Oh ! bright occasions of dispensing good,  
How seldom used, how little understood !  
To pour in virtue's lap her just reward,  
Keep vice restrained behind a double guard ;  
To quell the faction that affronts the throne,  
By silent magnanimity alone ;  
To nurse with tender care the thriving arts,  
Watch every beam philosophy imparts ;  
To give religion her unbridled scope,  
Nor judge by statute a believer's hope ;  
With close fidelity and love unfeigned  
To keep the matrimonial bond unstained ;  
Covetous only of a virtuous praise ;  
His life a lesson to the land he sways ;  
To touch the sword with conscientious awe,  
Nor draw it but when duty bids him draw ;  
To sheath it in the peace-restoring close  
With joy beyond what victory bestows ;  
Blest country, where these kingly glories shine :  
Blest England, if this happiness be thine !



*A.* Guard what you say; the patriotic tribe  
Will sneer and charge you with a bribe.—*B.* A  
bribe?

The worth of his three kingdoms I defy,  
To lure me to the baseness of a lie.  
And, of all lies, (be that one poet's boast)  
The lie that flatters I abhor the most.  
Those arts be their's, who hate his gentle reign,  
But he that loves him has no need to feign.

*A.* Your smooth eulogium to one crown addressed,  
Seems to imply a censure on the rest.

*B.* Quevedo, as he tells his sober tale,  
Asked, when in hell, to see the royal jail;  
Approved their method in all other things;  
But where, good sir, do you confine your kings;  
There—said his guide—the group is full in view.  
Indeed?—replied the Don—there are but few.  
His black interpreter the charge disdained—  
Few, fellow?—there are all that ever reigned.  
Wit, undistinguishing, is apt to strike  
The guilty and not guilty both alike.  
I grant the sarcasm is too severe,  
And we can readily refute it here;

While Alfred's name, the father of his age,  
And the Sixth Edward's grace the historic page.

*A.* Kings then at last have but the lot of all,  
By their own conduct they must stand or fall.

*B.* True. While they live, the courtly laureat pays  
His quit-rent ode, his pepper-corn of praise;  
And many a dunce whose fingers itch to write,  
Adds, as he can, his tributary mite;  
A subject's faults a subject may proclaim,  
A monarch's errors are forbidden game!  
Thus free from censure, over-awed by fear,  
And praised for virtues, that they scorn to wear,  
The fleeting forms of majesty engage  
Respect, while stalking over life's narrow stage;  
Then leave their crimes for history to scan,  
And ask with busy scorn, Was this the man?

I pity kings, whom worship waits upon  
Obsequious from the cradle to the throne;  
Before whose infant eyes the flatterer bows,  
And binds a wreath about their baby brows;  
Whom education stiffens into state,  
And death awakens from that dream too late.  
Oh! if servility with supple knees,  
Whose trade it is to smile, to crouch, to please;

If smooth dissimulation, skilled to grace  
A devil's purpose with an angel's face;  
If smiling peeresses, and simpering peers,  
Encompassing his throne a few short years;  
If the gilt carriage and the pampered steed,  
That wants no driving, and disdains the lead;  
If guards, mechanically formed in ranks,  
Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks,  
Shouldering and standing as if stuck to stone,  
While condescending majesty looks on;  
If monarchy consist in such base things,  
Sighing, I say again, I pity kings!

To be suspected, thwarted, and withstood,  
Even when he labours for his country's good;  
To see a band, called patriot for no cause,  
But that they catch at popular applause,  
Careless of all the anxiety he feels,  
Hook disappointment on the public wheels;  
With all their flippant fluency of tongue,  
Most confident, when palpably most wrong;  
If this be kingly, then farewell for me  
All kingship; and may I be poor and free!

To be the Table Talk of clubs up stairs,  
To which the unwashed artificer repairs,

To indulge his genius after long fatigue,  
 By diving into cabinet intrigue;  
 (For what kings deem a toil, as well they may,  
 To him is relaxation and mere play)  
 To win no praise when well-wrought plans prevail,  
 But to be rudely censured when they fail;  
 To doubt the love his favourites may pretend,  
 And in reality to find no friend;  
 If he indulge a cultivated taste,  
 His galleries with the works of art well graced, }  
 To hear it called extravagance and waste;  
 If these attendants, and if such as these,  
 Must follow royalty, then welcome ease;  
 However humble and confined the sphere,  
 Happy the state, that has not these to fear.

*A.* Thus men, whose thoughts contemplative  
 have dwelt

On situations, that they never felt,  
 Start up sagacious, covered with the dust  
 Of dreaming study and pedantic rust,  
 And prate and preach about what others prove,  
 As if the world and they were hand and glove.  
 Leave kingly backs to cope with kingly cares;  
 They have their weight to carry, subjects their's;



Poets, of all men, ever least regret  
Increasing taxes and the nation's debt.  
Could you contrive the payment, and rehearse  
The mighty plan, oracular, in verse,  
No bard, however majestic, old or new,  
Should claim my first attention more than you.

*B.* Not Brindley nor Bridgewater would essay  
To turn the course of Helicon that way ;  
Nor would the nine consent the sacred tide  
Should purl amidst the traffic of Cheapside,  
Or tinkle in 'Change Alley, to amuse  
The leathern ears of stock-jobbers and jews.

*A.* Vouchsafe, at least, to pitch the key of rhyme  
To themes more pertinent, if less sublime.  
When ministers and ministerial arts ;  
Patriots, who love good places at their hearts ;  
When admirals, extolled for standing still,  
Or doing nothing with a deal of skill ;  
Generals, who will not conquer when they may,  
Firm friends to peace, to pleasure, and good pay ;  
When freedom, wounded almost to despair,  
Though discontent alone can find out where ;  
When themes like these employ the poet's tongue,  
I hear as mute as if a fyren fung.

Or tell me, if you can, what power maintains  
A Britain's scorn of arbitrary chains?

That were a theme might animate the dead,  
And move the lips of poets cast in lead.

R. The cause, though worth the search, may  
yet elude

Conjecture and remark, however shrewd.

They take perhaps a well-directed aim,  
Who seek it in his climate and his frame.

Liberal in all things else, yet nature here  
With stern severity deals out the year.

Winter invades the spring, and often pours  
A chilling flood on summer's drooping flowers;

Unwelcome vapours quench autumnal beams,  
Ungenial blasts attending curl the streams;

The peasants urge their harvest, ply the fork  
With double toil, and shiver at their work;

Thus with a rigour, for his good designed  
She rears her favourite man of all mankind.

His form robust and of elastic tone,

Proportioned well, half muscle and half bone,  
Supplies with warm activity and force

A mind well-lodged, and masculine of course.

Hence liberty, sweet liberty inspires,  
And keeps alive his fierce but noble fires.  
Patient of constitutional controul,  
He bears it with meek manliness of soul;  
But, if authority grow wanton, woe  
To him, that treads upon his free-born toe;  
One step beyond the boundary of the laws  
Fires him at once in freedom's glorious cause.  
Thus proud prerogative, not much revered  
Is seldom felt, though sometimes seen and heard;  
And in his cage, like parrot fine and gay,  
Is kept to strut, look big, and talk away.

Born in a climate softer far than our's,  
Not formed like us, with such Herculean powers,  
The Frenchman, easy, debonair and brisk,  
Give him his lufs, his fiddle, and his frisk,  
Is always happy, reign whoever may,  
And laughs the sense of misery far away:  
He drinks his simple beverage with a gust;  
And, feasting on an onion and a crust,  
We never feel the alacrity and joy,  
With which he shouts and carols *Vive le Roy*,  
Filled with as much true merriment and glee,  
As if he heard his king say—Slave, be free.

Thus happiness depends, as nature shows,  
Less on exterior things than most suppose.  
Vigilant over all that he has made,  
Kind Providence attends with gracious aid;  
Bids equity throughout his works prevail,  
And weighs the nations in an even scale;  
He can encourage slavery to a smile,  
And fill with discontent a British isle.

*A.* Freeman and slave then, if the case be such,  
Stand on a level; and you prove too much:  
If all men indiscriminately share  
His fostering power, and tutelary care,  
As well be yoked by despotism's hand,  
As dwell at large in Britain's chartered land.

*B.* No. Freedom has a thousand charms to show,  
That slaves, however contented, never know.  
The mind attains beneath her happy reign  
The growth, that nature meant she should attain;  
The varied fields of science, ever new,  
Opening and wider opening on her view,  
She ventures onward with a prosperous force,  
While no base fear impedes her in her course.  
Religion, richest favour of the skies,  
Stands most revealed before the freeman's eyes;



No shades of superstition blot the day,  
Liberty chafes all that gloom away;  
The soul, emancipated, unoppressed,  
Free to prove all things and hold fast the best,  
Learns much; and to a thousand listening minds  
Communicates with joy the good she finds:  
Courage in arms, and ever prompt to show  
His manly forehead to the fiercest foe;  
Glorious in war, but for the sake of peace,  
His spirits rising as his toils increase,  
Guards well what arts and industry have won,  
And freedom claims him for her first-born son.  
Slaves fight for what were better cast away—  
The chain that binds them, and a tyrant's sway;  
But they, that fight for freedom, undertake  
The noblest cause mankind can have at stake:  
Religion, virtue, truth, whate'er we call  
A blessing—freedom is the pledge of all.  
Oh liberty! the prisoner's pleasing dream,  
The poet's muse, his passion and his theme;  
Genius is thine, and thou art fancy's nurse;  
Lost without thee the ennobling powers of verse;  
Heroic song from thy free touch acquires  
Its clearest tone, the rapture it inspires:

Place me where winter breathes his keenest air,  
And I will sing, if liberty be there;  
And I will sing at liberty's dear feet,  
In Afric's torrid clime, or India's fiercest heat.

*A.* Sing where you please; in such a cause I grant  
An English poet's privilege to rant;  
But is not freedom—at least is not our's  
Too apt to play the wanton with her powers,  
Grow freakish, and overleaping every mound,  
Spread anarchy and terror all around?

*B.* Agreed. But would you sell or flay your horse  
For bounding and curvetting in his course;  
Or if, when ridden with a careless rein,  
He break away, and seek the distant plain?  
No. His high mettle, under good controul,  
Gives him Olympic speed, and shoots him to the goal.

Let discipline employ her wholesome arts;  
Let magistrates alert perform their parts,  
Not skulk or put on a prudential mask,  
As if their duty were a desperate task;  
Let active laws apply the needful curb  
To guard the peace; that riot would disturb;  
And liberty, preserved from wild excess,  
Shall raise no feuds for armies to suppress.

When tumult lately burst his prison door,  
And set plebeian thousands in a roar;  
When he usurped authority's just place,  
And dared to look his master in the face;  
When the rude rabble's watch-word was—destroy,  
And blazing London seemed a second Troy;  
Liberty blushed, and hung her drooping head,  
Beheld their progress with the deepest dread;  
Blushed, that effects like these she should produce,  
Worse than the deeds of galley-slaves broke loose.  
She loses in such storms her very name,  
And fierce licentiousness should bear the blame.

Incomparable gem! thy worth untold;  
Cheap, though blood-bought; and thrown away  
when sold;

May no foes ravish thee, and no false friend  
Betray thee, while professing to defend;  
Prize it, ye ministers; ye monarchs, spare;  
Ye patriots, guard it with a miser's care.

A. Patriots, alas! the few that have been found,  
Where most they flourish, upon English ground,  
The country's need have scantily supplied,  
And the last left the scene when Chatham died.

B. Not so—the virtue still adorns our age,  
Though the chief actor died upon the stage.  
In him Demosthenes was heard again;  
Liberty taught him her Athenian strain;  
She clothed him with authority and awe,  
Spoke from his lips, and in his looks gave law.  
His speech, his form, his action, full of grace,  
And all his country beaming in his face,  
He stood, as some inimitable hand  
Would strive to make a Paul or Tully stand.  
No sycophant or slave, that dared oppose  
Her sacred cause, but trembled when he rose;  
And every venal stickler for the yoke  
Felt himself crushed at the first word he spoke.

Such men are raised to station and command,  
When Providence means mercy to a land.  
He speaks, and they appear; to him they owe  
Skill to direct, and strength to strike the blow;  
To manage with address, to seize with power  
The crisis of a dark decisive hour.  
So Gideon earned a victory not his own;  
Subserviency his praise, and that alone.

Poor England! thou art a devoted deer,  
Beset with every ill but that of fear.



The nations hunt; all mark thee for a prey;  
They swarm around thee, and thou stand'st at bay.  
Undaunted still, though wearied and perplexed,  
Once Chatham saved thee; but who saves thee next?  
Alas! the tide of pleasure sweeps along  
All, that should be the boast of British song.  
'Tis not the wreath, that once adorned thy brow,  
The prize of happier times, will serve thee now.  
Our ancestry; a gallant christian race,  
Patterns of every virtue, every grace,  
Confessed a God; they kneeled before they fought,  
And praised him in the victories he wrought.  
Now from the dust of ancient days bring forth  
Their sober zeal, integrity, and worth;  
Courage, ungraced by these, affronts the skies,  
Is but the fire without the sacrifice.  
The stream, that feeds the well-spring of the heart,  
Not more invigorates life's noblest part,  
Than virtue quickens with a warmth divine  
The powers, that sin has brought to a decline.

*A.* The inestimable estimate of Brown  
Rose like a paper-kite, and charmed the town;  
But measures, planned and executed well,  
Shifted the wind that raised it, and it fell.

He trod the very self-same ground you tread,  
And victory refuted all he said.

\ B. And yet his judgment was not framed amiss;  
Its error, if it erred, was merely this—  
He thought the dying hour already come,  
And a complete recovery struck him dumb.

But that effeminacy, folly, lust,  
Enervate and enfeeble, and needs must,  
And that a nation shamefully debased,  
Will be despised and trampled on at last,  
Unless sweet penitence her powers renew,  
Is truth, if history itself be true.

There is a time, and justice marks the date,  
For long-forbearing clemency to wait;  
That hour elapsed, the incurable revolt  
Is punished, and down comes the thunder-bolt.  
If mercy *then* put by the threatening blow,  
Must she perform the same kind office *now*?  
May she! and, if offended heaven be still  
Accessible, and prayer prevail, she will.  
'Tis not however insolence and noise,  
The tempest of tumultuary joys,  
Nor is it yet despondence and dismay  
Will win her visits or engage her stay;

Prayer only, and the penitential tear,  
Can call her smiling down, and fix her here.

But when a country (one that I could name)  
In prostitution sinks the sense of shame;  
When infamous venality, grown bold,  
Writes on his bosom, *to be let or sold*;  
When perjury, that heaven-defying vice,  
Sells oaths by tale, and at the lowest price,  
Stamps God's own name upon a lie just made,  
To turn a penny in the way of trade;  
When avarice starves (and never hides his face)  
Two or three millions of the human race,  
And not a tongue inquires, how, where, or when,  
Though conscience will have twinges now and then;  
When profanation of the sacred cause  
In all its parts, times, ministry, and laws,  
Bespeaks a land, once christian, fallen and lost  
In all, that wars against that title most,  
What follows next let cities of great name,  
And regions long since desolate, proclaim.  
Nineveh, Babylon, and ancient Rome,  
Speak to the present times, and times to come;  
They cry aloud in every careless ear,  
Stop, while you may; suspend your mad career;

O learn from our example and our fate,  
Learn wisdom and repentance ere too late.

Not only vice disposes and prepares  
The mind, that slumbers sweetly in her snares,  
To stoop to tyranny's usurped command,  
And bend her polished neck beneath his hand,  
(A dire effect, by one of nature's laws  
Unchangeably connected with its cause);  
But Providence himself will intervene  
To throw his dark displeasure over the scene.  
All are his instruments; each form of war,  
What burns at home, or threatens from afar,  
Nature in arms, her elements at strife,  
The storms, that overset the joys of life,  
Are but his rods to scourge a guilty land,  
And waste it at the bidding of his hand.  
He gives the word, and mutiny soon roars  
In all her gates, and shakes her distant shores;  
The standards of all nations are unfurled;  
She has one foe, and that one foe the world.  
And, if he doom that people with a frown,  
And mark them with a seal of wrath pressed down,  
Obduracy takes place; callous and tough,  
The reprobated race grows judgment proof:



Earth shakes beneath them, and heaven roars above;  
But nothing scares them from the course they love:  
To the lascivious pipe and wanton song,  
That charm down fear, they frolic it along,  
With mad rapidity and unconcern,  
Down to the gulph, from which is no return.  
They trust in navies, and their navies fail—  
God's curse can cast away ten thousand sail!  
They trust in armies, and their courage dies;  
In wisdom, wealth, in fortune, and in lies:  
But all they trust in withers, as it must,  
When He commands, in whom they place no trust.  
Vengeance at last pours down upon their coast  
A long despised, but now victorious host;  
Tyranny sends the chain, that must abridge  
The noble sweep of all their privilege;  
Gives liberty the last, the mortal shock:  
Slips the slave's collar on, and snaps the lock.

*A.* Such lofty strains embellish what you teach,  
Mean you to prophesy, or but to preach?

*B.* I know the mind, that feels indeed the fire  
The muse imparts, and can command the lyre,  
Acts with a force, and kindles with a zeal,  
Whatever the theme, that others never feel.

If human woes her soft attention claim,  
A tender sympathy pervades the frame,  
She pours a sensibility divine  
Along the nerve of every feeling line.  
But if a deed not tamely to be borne  
Fire indignation and a sense of scorn,  
The strings are swept with such a power so loud,  
The storm of music shakes the astonished crowd.  
So, when remote futurity is brought  
Before the keen inquiry of her thought,  
A terrible sagacity informs  
The poet's heart; he looks to distant storms;  
He hears the thunder ere the tempest lowers;  
And armed with strength surpassing human powers,  
Seizes events as yet unknown to man,  
And darts his soul into the dawning plan.  
Hence, in a Roman mouth, the graceful name  
Of prophet and of poet was the same;  
Hence British poets too the priesthood shared,  
And every hallowed druid was a bard.  
But no prophetic fires to me belong;  
I play with syllables, and sport in song.

*A.* At Westminster, where little poets strive  
To set a distich upon six and five,



Where discipline helps opening buds of sense,  
And makes his pupils proud with silver-pence,  
I was a poet too : but modern taste  
Is so refined, and delicate, and chaste,  
That verse, whatever fire the fancy warms,  
Without a creamy smoothness has no charms.  
Thus, all success depending on an ear,  
And thinking I might purchase it too dear,  
If sentiment were sacrificed to sound,  
And truth cut short to make a period round,  
I judged a man of sense could scarce do worse,  
Than caper in the morris-dance of verse.

*B.* Thus reputation is a spur to wit,  
And some wits flag through fear of losing it.  
Give me the line, that plows its stately course  
Like a proud swan conquering the stream by force;  
That, like some cottage beauty, strikes the heart,  
Quite unindebted to the tricks of art.  
When labour and when dulness, club in hand,  
Like the two figures at St. Dunstan's stand,  
Beating alternately, in measured time,  
The clock-work tintinabulum of rhyme,  
Exact and regular the sounds will be;  
But such mere quarter-strokes are not for me.

From him, who rears a poem lank and long,  
To him, who strains his all into a song;  
Perhaps some bonny Caledonian air,  
All birks and braes, though he was never there;  
Or, having whelped a prologue with great pains,  
Feels himself spent, and fumbles for his brains;  
A prologue interdash'd with many a stroke—  
An art contrived to advertise a joke,  
So that the jest is clearly to be seen  
Not in the words—but in the gap between:  
Manner is all in all, whatever is writ,  
The substitute for genius, sense, and wit.

To dally much with subjects mean and low  
Proves that the mind is weak, or makes it so.  
Neglected talents rust into decay;  
And every effort ends in push-pin play.  
The man, that means success, should soar above  
A soldier's feather or a lady's glove;  
Else, summoning the muse to such a theme,  
The fruit of all her labour is whipt-cream.  
As if an eagle flew aloft, and then—  
Stooped from its highest pitch to pounce a wren.  
As if the poet, purposing to wed,  
Should carve himself a wife in gingerbread.



Ages elapsed ere Homer's lamp appeared,  
And ages ere the Mantuan swan was heard:  
To carry nature lengths unknown before,  
To give a Milton birth, asked ages more.  
Thus genius rose and set at ordered times,  
And shot a day-spring into distant climes,  
Ennobling every region that he chose ;  
He sunk in Græce, in Italy he rose ;  
And, tedious years of Gothic darkness passed,  
Emerged all splendour in our isle at last.  
Thus lovely halcyons dive into the main,  
Then show far off their shining plumes again.

*A.* Is genius only found in epic lays ?  
Prove this, and forfeit all pretence to praise.  
Make their heroic powers your own at once,  
Or candidly confess yourself a dunce.

*B.* These were the chief: each interval of night  
Was graced with many an undulating light.  
In less illustrious bards his beauty shone  
A meteor, or a star; in these, the sun.

The nightingale may claim the topmost bough,  
While the poor grasshopper must chirp below:  
Like him unnoticed, I, and such as I,  
Spread little wings, and rather skip than fly ;

Perched on the meagre produce of the land,  
An ell or two of prospect we command;  
But never peep beyond the thorny bound,  
Or oaken fence, that hems the paddock round.

In Eden, ere yet innocence of heart  
Had faded, poetry was not an art;  
Language, above all teaching, or, if taught,  
Only by gratitude and glowing thought,  
Elegant as simplicity, and warm  
As ecstacy, unmanacled by form,  
Not prompted, as in our degenerate days,  
By low ambition and the thirst of praise,  
Was natural as is the flowing stream,  
And yet magnificent—A God the theme!  
That theme on earth exhausted, though above  
'Tis found as everlasting as his love,  
Man lavished all his thoughts on human things—  
The feats of heroes, and the wrath of kings:  
But still, while virtue kindled his delight,  
The song was moral, and so far was right.  
'Twas thus till luxury seduced the mind,  
To joys less innocent, as less refined;  
Then genius danced a bacchanal; he crowned  
The brimming goblet, seized the thyrsus, bound



His brows with ivy, rushed into the field  
Of wild imagination and there reeled,  
The victim of his own lascivious fires,  
And dizzy with delight, profaned the sacred wires.  
Anacreon, Horace played in Greece and Rome  
This bedlam part; and others nearer home.  
When Cromwell fought for power, and while he  
    reigned

The proud protector of the power he gained,  
Religion harsh, intolerant, austere,  
Parent of manners like herself severe,  
Drew a rough copy of the Christian face  
Without the smile, the sweetness, or the grace;  
The dark and sullen humour of the time  
Judged every effort of the muse a crime;  
Verse, in the finest mould of fancy cast,  
Was lumber in an age so void of taste:  
But, when the second Charles assumed the sway,  
And arts revived beneath a softer day,  
Then, like a bow long forced into a curve,  
The mind, released from too constrained a nerve,  
Flew to its first position with a spring,  
That made the vaulted roofs of pleasure ring,

His court, the dissolute and hateful school  
Of wantonness, where vice was taught by rule,  
Swarmed with a scribbling herd, as deep inlaid  
With brutal lust as ever Circe made.  
From these a long succession, in the rage  
Of rank obscenity, debauched their age;  
Nor ceased, till, ever anxious to redress  
The abuses of her sacred charge, the press,  
The muse instructed a well-nurtured train  
Of abler votaries to cleanse the stain,  
And claim the palm for purity of song,  
That lewdness had usurped and worn so long.  
Then decent pleasantry and sterling sense,  
That neither gave nor would endure offence,  
Whipped out of sight, with satire just and keen,  
The puppy pack that had defiled the scene.

In front of these came Addison. In him  
Humour in holiday and slightly trim,  
Sublimity and attic taste, combined,  
To polish, furnish, and delight the mind.  
Then Pope, as harmony itself exact,  
In verse well disciplined, complete, compact,  
Gave virtue and morality a grace,  
That, quite eclipsing pleasure's painted face,



Levied a tax of wonder and applause,  
Even on the fools that trampled on their laws.  
But he (his musical finessè was such,  
So nice his ear, so delicate his touch)  
Made poetry a mere mechanic art;  
And every warbler has his tune by heart.  
Nature imparting her satiric gift,  
Her serious mirth, to Arbuthnot and Swift,  
With droll sobriety they raised a smile  
At folly's cost, themselves unmoved the while.  
That constellation set, the world in vain  
Must hope to look upon their like again.

*A.* Are we then left—*B.* Not wholly in the dark;  
Wit now and then, struck smartly, shows a spark,  
Sufficient to redeem the modern race  
From total night and absolute disgrace.  
While servile trick and imitative knack,  
Confine the million in the beaten track,  
Perhaps some courser who disdains the road,  
Snuffs up the wind, and flings himself abroad.

Contemporaries all surpassed, see one;  
Short his career, indeed, but ably run;  
Churchill; himself unconscious of his powers,  
In penury consumed his idle hours;

And, like a scattered seed at random sown,  
Was left to spring by vigour of his own.  
Lifted at length, by dignity of thought  
And dint of genius, to an affluent lot,  
He laid his head in luxury's soft lap,  
And took, too often, there his easy nap.  
If brighter beams than all he threw not forth,  
'Twas negligence in him, not want of worth.  
Surly and slovenly, and bold and coarse,  
Too proud for art, and trusting in mere force,  
Spendthrift alike of money and of wit,  
Always at speed, and never drawing bit,  
He struck the lyre in such a careless mood,  
And so disdained the rules he understood,  
The laurel seemed to wait on his command;  
He snatched it rudely from the muses' hand.  
Nature, exerting an unwearied power,  
Forms, opens, and gives scent to, every flower;  
Spreads the fresh verdure of the fields, and leads  
The dancing Naiads through the dewy meads:  
She fills profuse ten thousand little throats  
With music, modulating all their notes;  
And charms the woodland scenes, and wilds unknown,  
With artless airs and concerts of her own:



But seldom (as if fearful of expence)  
Vouchsafes to man a poet's just pretence—  
Fervency, freedom, fluency of thought,  
Harmony, strength, words exquisitely sought;  
Fancy, that from the bow, that spans the sky,  
Brings colours, dipt in heaven, that never die;  
A soul exalted above earth, a mind  
Skilled in the characters that form mankind;  
And, as the sun in rising beauty dressed,  
Looks to the westward from the dappled east,  
And marks, whatever clouds may interpose,  
Ere yet his race begins, its glorious close;  
An eye like his to catch the distant goal;  
Or, ere the wheels of verse begin to roll,  
Like his to shed illuminating rays  
On every scene and subject it surveys:  
Thus graced, the man asserts a poet's name,  
And the world cheerfully admits the claim.  
Pity religion has so seldom found  
A skilful guide into poetic ground!  
The flowers would spring wherever she deigned to  
    stray,  
And every muse attend her in her way.  
Virtue indeed meets many a rhiming friend,  
And many a compliment politely penned;

But, unattired in that becoming vest  
Religion weaves for her, and half undressed,  
Stands in the desert, shivering and forlorn,  
A wintry figure, like a withered thorn.  
The shelves are full, all other themes are sped !  
Hackneyed and worn to the last flimsy thread,  
Satire has long since done his best ; and curst  
And loathsome ribaldry has done his worst ;  
Fancy has sported all her powers away  
In tales, in trifles, and in children's play ;  
And 'tis the sad complaint, and almost true,  
Whatever we write, we bring forth nothing new.  
Twere new indeed to see a bard all fire,  
Touched with a coal from heaven, assume the lyre,  
And tell the world, still kindling as he sung,  
With more than mortal music on his tongue,  
That He, who died below, and reigns above,  
Inspires the song, and that his name is love.

For, after all, if merely to beguile,  
By flowing numbers and a flowery style,  
The tædium that the lazy rich endure,  
Which now and then sweet poetry may cure ;  
Or, if to see the name of idle self,  
Stamped on the well-bound quarto, grace the shelf,



To float a bubble on the breath of fame,  
Prompt his endeavour and engage his aim,  
Debased to servile purposes of pride,  
How are the powers of genius misapplied!  
The gift, whose office is the Giver's praise,  
To trace him in his word, his works, his ways!  
Then spread the rich discovery, and invite  
Mankind to share in the divine delight.  
Distorted from its use and just design,  
To make the pitiful possessor shine,  
To purchase, at the fool-frequented fair  
Of vanity, a wreath for self to wear,  
Is profanation of the basest kind—  
Proof of a trifling and a worthless mind.

*A.* Hail Sternhold, then; and Hopkins, hail!

*B.* Amen.

If flattery, folly, lust, employ the pen;  
If acrimony, slander, and abuse,  
Give it a charge to blacken and traduce;  
Though Butler's wit, Pope's numbers, Prior's ease,  
With all that fancy can invent to please,  
Adorn the polished periods as they fall,  
One madrigal of their's is worth them all.

*A.* 'Twould thin the ranks of the poetic tribe,  
To dash the pen through all that you proscribe.

*B.* No matter—we could shift when they were  
not;

And should, no doubt, if they were all forgot.



THE  
PROGRESS OF ERROR.

*Si quid loquar audiendum.* HOR. Lib. 4. Od. 2.

SING, muse (if such a theme, so dark, so long,  
May find a muse to grace it with a song)  
By what unseen and unsuspected arts  
The serpent error twines round human hearts;  
Tell where she lurks, beneath what flowery shades,  
That not a glimpse of genuine light pervades,  
The poisonous, black, insinuating worm  
Successfully conceals her loathsome form.  
Take, if ye can, ye careless and supine,  
Counsel and caution from a voice like mine!  
Truths, that the theorist could never reach,  
And observation taught me, I would teach.



Not all, whose eloquence the fancy fills,  
Musical as the chime of tinkling rills,  
Weak to perform, though mighty to pretend,  
Can trace her mazy windings to their end;  
Discern the fraud beneath the specious lure,  
Prevent the danger, or prescribe the cure.  
The clear harangue, and cold as it is clear,  
Falls soporific on the listless ear;  
Like quicksilver, the rhetoric they display  
Shines as it runs, but grasped at slips away.

Placed for his trial on this bustling stage,  
From thoughtless youth to ruminating age,  
Free in his will to choose or to refuse,  
Man may improve the crisis, or abuse;  
Else, on the fatalists unrighteous plan,  
Say to what bar amenable were man?  
With nought in charge he could betray no trust,  
And, if he fell, would fall because he must;  
If love reward him, or if vengeance strike,  
His recompence in both unjust alike.  
Divine authority within his breast  
Brings every thought, word, action, to the test;  
Warns him or prompts, approves him or restrains;  
As reason, or as passion, takes the reins.

Heaven from above, and conscience from within,  
Cries in his startled ear—Abstain from sin!  
The world around solicits his desire,  
And kindles in his soul a treacherous fire;  
While, all his purposes and steps to guard,  
Peace follows virtue as its sure reward;  
And pleasure brings as surely in her train  
Remorse, and sorrow, and vindictive pain.

Man, thus endued with an elective voice,  
Must be supplied with objects of his choice,  
Wherever he turns, enjoyment and delight,  
Or present, or in prospect, meet his sight;  
Those open on the spot their honeyed store;  
These call him loudly to pursuit of more.  
His unexhausted mine the fordid vice  
Avarice flows, and virtue is the price.  
Here various motives his ambition raise—  
Power, pomp, and splendour, and the thirst of praise;  
There beauty woos him with expanded arms;  
Even Bacchanalian madness has its charms.

Nor these alone, whose pleasures less refined  
Might well alarm the most unguarded mind,  
Seek to supplant his inexperienced youth,  
Or lead him devious from the path of truth;



Hourly allurements on his passions press,  
Safe in themselves, but dangerous in the excess.

Hark ! how it floats upon the dewy air !  
O what a dying, dying close was there !  
'Tis harmony from yon sequestered bower,  
Sweet harmony, that sooths the midnight hour !  
Long ere the charioteer of day had run  
His morning course, the enchantment was begun ;  
And he shall gild yon mountain's height again,  
Ere yet the pleasing toil becomes a pain.

Is this the rugged path, the steep ascent,  
That virtue points to ? Can a life thus spent  
Lead to the bliss she promises, the wise,  
Detach the soul from earth, and speed her to the  
      skies ?

Ye devotees to your adored employ,  
Enthusiasts, drunk with an unreal joy,  
Love makes the music of the blest above,  
Heaven's harmony is universal love ;  
And earthly sounds, tho' sweet and well combined,  
And lenient as soft opiates to the mind,  
Leave vice and folly unsubdued behind. }

Gray dawn appears ; the sportsman and his train  
Speckle the bosom of the distant plain ;



'Tis he, the Nimrod of the neighbouring lairs,  
Save that his scent is less acute than theirs;  
For persevering chase, and headlong leaps,  
True beagle as the staunchest hound he keeps.  
Charged with the folly of his life's mad scene,  
He takes offence, and wonders what you mean;  
The joy the danger and the toil overpays—  
'Tis exercise, and health and length of days.  
Again impetuous to the field he flies;  
Leaps every fence but one, there falls and dies;  
Like a slain deer, the tumbrel brings him home,  
Unmissed but by his dogs and by his groom.

Ye clergy, while your orbit is your place,  
Lights of the world, and stars of human race;  
But, if eccentric ye forsake your sphere,  
Prodigies ominous, and viewed with fear.  
The comet's baneful influence is a dream;  
Your's real and pernicious in the extreme.  
What then!—are appetites and lusts laid down  
With the same ease that man puts on his gown?  
Will avarice and concupiscence give place,  
Charmed by the sounds—Your Reverence or Your  
Grace?

No. But his own engagement binds him fast;  
Or, if it does not, brands him to the last  
What atheists call him—a designing knave,  
A mere church juggler, hypocrite, and slave.  
Oh, laugh or mourn with me the rueful jest,  
A cassocked huntsman, and a fiddling priest!  
He from Italian songsters takes his cue:  
Set Paul to music, he shall quote him too.  
He takes the field, the master of the pack  
Cries—Well done faint! and claps him on the  
back.

Is this the path of sanctity? Is this  
To stand a way-mark in the road to bliss?  
Himself a wanderer from the narrow way,  
His silly sheep what wonder if they stray?  
Go, cast your orders at your Bishop's feet,  
Send your dishonoured gown to Monmouth-street!  
The sacred function in your hands is made—  
Sad sacrilege! no function, but a trade!

Occidius is a pastor of renown,  
When he has prayed and preached the sabbath down,  
With wire and catgut he concludes the day,  
Quavering and semiquavering care away.



The full concerto swells upon your ear ;  
All elbows shake. Look in, and you would swear  
The Babylonian tyrant with a nod  
Had summoned them to serve his golden God.  
So well that thought the employment seems to suit,  
Psaltery and sackbut, dulcimer and flute.  
Oh fie ! 'tis evangelical and pure :  
Observe each face, how sober and demure !  
Ecstasy sets her stamp on every mien ;  
Chins fallen, and not an eye-ball to be seen.  
Still I insist, though music heretofore  
Has charmed me much, (not even Occidius more)  
Love, joy, and peace make harmony more meet  
For sabbath evenings, and perhaps as sweet.

Will not the fickliest sheep of every flock  
Resort to this example as a rock ;  
There stand, and justify the foul abuse  
Of sabbath hours with plausible excuse ;  
If apostolic gravity be free  
To play the fool on Sundays, why not we ?  
If he the tinkling harpsichord regards  
As inoffensive, what offence in cards ?  
Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay,  
Laymen have leave to dance, if parsons play.



Oh Italy!—Thy sabbaths will be soon  
 Our sabbaths, closed with mummary and buffoon.  
 Preaching and pranks will share the motley scene,  
 Our's parcelled out, as thine have ever been,  
 God's worship and the mountebank between. }  
 What says the prophet? Let that day be blest  
 With holiness and consecrated rest.  
 Pastime and business both it should exclude,  
 And bar the door the moment they intrude;  
 Nobly distinguished above all the fix  
 By deeds, in which the world must never mix.  
 Hear him again. He calls it a delight,  
 A day of luxury, observed aright,  
 When the glad soul is made heaven's welcome guest,  
 Sits banqueting, and God provides the feast.  
 But triflers are engaged and cannot come;  
 Their answer to the call is—*Not at home.*

Oh the dear pleasures of the velvet plain,  
 The painted tablets, dealt and dealt again.  
 Cards with what rapture, and the polished die,  
 The yawning chasm of indolence supply!  
 Then to the dance, and make the sober moon  
 Witness of joys, that shun the sight of noon.

Blame, cynic, if you can, quadrille or ball,  
The snug close party, or the splendid hall,  
Where night, down-stooping from her ebon throne,  
Views constellations brighter than her own.  
'Tis innocent, and harmless, and refined,  
The balm of care, elysium of the mind.  
Innocent! Oh if venerable time  
Slain at the foot of pleasure be no crime,  
Then, with his silver beard and magic wand,  
Let Comus rise Archbishop of the land;  
Let him your rubric and your feasts prescribe,  
Grand metropolitan of all the tribe.

Of manners rough, and coarse athletic cast,  
The rank debauch suits Clodio's filthy taste.  
Rufillus exquisitely formed by rule,  
Not of the moral, but the dancing school,  
Wonders at Clodio's follies, in a tone  
As tragical, as others at his own.  
He cannot drink five bottles, bilk the score,  
Then kill a constable, and drink five more;  
But he can draw a pattern, make a tart,  
And has the ladies etiquette by heart.  
Go fool; and, arm in arm with Clodio, plead  
Your cause before a bar you little dread;



But know, the law, that bids the drunkard die,  
Is far too just to pass the trifler by.  
Both baby-featured, and of infant size,  
Viewed from a distance, and with heedless eyes,  
Folly and innocence are so alike,  
The difference, though essential, fails to strike.  
Yet folly ever has a vacant stare,  
A simpering countenance, and a trifling air;  
But innocence sedate, serene, erect,  
Delights us by engaging our respect.  
Man, nature's guest by invitation sweet,  
Receives from her both appetite and treat;  
But, if he play the glutton and exceed,  
His benefactress blushes at the deed,  
For nature, nice, as liberal to dispense,  
Made nothing but a brute the slave of sense.  
Daniel ate pulse by choice—example rare!  
Heaven blessed the youth, and made him fresh and  
fair.

Gorgonius sits, abdominous and wan,  
Like a fat squab upon a Chinese fan:  
He snuffs far off the anticipated joy;  
Turtle and venison all his thoughts employ;



Prepares for meals as jockies take a sweat,  
Oh, nauseous!—an emetic for a whet!  
Will Providence overlook the wasted good?  
Temperance were no virtue if he could.

That pleasures, therefore, or what such we call,  
Are hurtful, is a truth confessed by all.  
And some, that seem to threaten virtue less,  
Still hurtful, in the abuse, or by the excess.

Is man then only for his torment placed  
The centre of delights he may not taste?  
Like fabled Tantalus condemned to hear  
The precious stream still purling in his ear,  
Lip-deep in what he longs for, and yet curst  
With prohibition, and perpetual thirst?  
No, wrangler—destitute of shame and sense,  
The precept, that enjoins him abstinence,  
Forbids him none but the licentious joy,  
Whose fruit, though fair, tempts only to destroy.  
Remorse, the fatal egg by pleasure laid  
In every bosom where her nest is made,  
Hatched by the beams of truth, denies him rest,  
And proves a raging scorpion in his breast.  
No pleasure? Are domestic comforts dead?  
Are all the nameless sweets of friendship fled?

Has time worn out, or fashion put to shame,  
Good sense, good health, good conscience, and  
good fame?

All these belong to virtue, and all prove  
That virtue has a title to your love.

Have you no touch of pity, that the poor  
Stand starved at your inhospitable door?

Or if yourself too scantily supplied

Need help, let honest industry provide.

Earn, if you want; if you abound, impart:

These both are pleasures to the feeling heart.

No pleasure? Has some sickly eastern waste  
Sent us a wind to parch us at a blast?

Can British paradise no scenes afford

To please her fated and indifferent lord?

Are sweet philosophy's enjoyments run

Quite to the lees? And has religion none?

Brutes capable would tell you 'tis a lie,

And judge you from the kennel and the sty.

Delights like these, ye sensual and profane,

Ye are bid, begged, besought to entertain;

Called to these crystal streams, do ye turn off

Obscene to swill and swallow at a trough?



Envy the beast then, on whom heaven bestows  
Your pleasures, with no curses in the close.

Pleasure admitted in undue degree  
Enslaves the will, nor leaves the judgment free.  
'Tis not alone the grape's enticing juice  
Unnerves the moral powers, and mars their use;  
Ambition, avarice, and the lust of fame,  
And woman, lovely woman, does the same.  
The heart, surrendered to the ruling power  
Of some ungoverned passion every hour,  
Finds by degrees the truths, that once bore sway,  
And all their deep impressions, wear away;  
So coin grows smooth, in traffic current passed,  
Till Cæsar's image is effaced at last.

The breach, though small at first, soon opening  
wide,  
In rushes folly with a full-moon tide,  
Then welcome errors of whatever size,  
To justify it by a thousand lies.  
As creeping ivy clings to wood or stone,  
And hides the ruin that it feeds upon;  
So sophistry cleaves close to and protects  
Sin's rotten trunk, concealing its defects.



Mortals, whose pleasures are their only care,  
First wish to be imposed on, and then are.  
And, lest the fulsome artifice should fail,  
Themselves will hide its coarseness with a veil.  
Not more industrious are the just and true  
To give to virtue what is virtue's due—  
The praise of wisdom, comeliness, and worth,  
And call her charms to public notice forth—  
Than vice's mean and disingenuous race  
To hide the shocking features of her face.  
Her form with dress and lotion they repair;  
Then kiss their idol, and pronounce her fair.

The sacred implement I now employ  
Might prove a mischief, or at best a toy;  
A trifle, if it move but to amuse;  
But, if to wrong the judgment and abuse,  
Worse than a poignard in the basest hand,  
It stabs at once the morals of a land.

Ye writers of what none with safety reads,  
Footing it in the dance that fancy leads;  
Ye novelists, who mar what ye would mend,  
Snivelling and drivelling folly without end;  
Whose corresponding misses fill the ream  
With sentimental frippery and dream,

Caught in a delicate soft filken net  
By some lewd earl, or rake-hell baronet:  
Ye pimps, who under virtue's fair pretence,  
Steal to the closet of young innocence,  
And teach her, unexperienced yet and green,  
To scribble as you scribbled at fifteen;  
Who, kindling a combustion of desire,  
With some cold moral think to quench the fire;  
Though all your engineering proves in vain,  
The dribbling stream never puts it out again:  
Oh that a verse had power and could command  
Far, far away these flesh-flies of the land;  
Who fasten without mercy on the fair,  
And suck, and leave a craving maggot there.  
However disguised the inflammatory tale,  
And covered with a fine-spun specious veil;  
Such writers, and such readers, owe the gust  
And relish of their pleasure all to lust.

But the muse, eagle-pinioned, has in view  
A quarry more important still than you;  
Down, down the wind she swims and sails away,  
Now stoops upon it, and now grasps the prey.

Petronius! all the muses weep for thee;  
But every tear shall scald thy memory:



The graces too, while virtue at their shrine  
Lay bleeding under that soft hand of thine,  
Felt each a mortal stab in her own breast,  
Abhorred the sacrifice, and curst the priest.  
Thou polished and high-finished foe to truth,  
Gray-beard corrupter of our listening youth,  
To purge and skim away the filth of vice,  
That so refined it might the more entice,  
Then pour it on the morals of thy son;  
To taint *his* heart, was worthy of *thine own* !  
Now, while the poison all high life pervades,  
Write, if thou canst, one letter from the shades;  
One, and one only, charged with deep regret  
That thy worst part, thy principles, live yet:  
One sad epistle thence may cure mankind  
Of the plague spread by bundles left behind.

'Tis granted, and no plainer truth appears,  
Our most important are our earliest years;  
The mind, impressible and soft, with ease  
Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees,  
And through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue,  
That education gives her, false or true.  
Plants raised with tenderness are seldom strong;  
Man's coltish disposition asks the thong;



And without discipline the favourite child,  
Like a neglected forester, runs wild.  
But we, as if good qualities would grow  
Spontaneous, take but little pains to sow;  
We give some Latin, and a smatch of Greek;  
Teach him to fence and figure twice a week;  
And having done, we think, the best we can,  
Praise his proficiency, and dub him man.

From school to Cam or Isis, and thence home:  
And thence with all convenient speed to Rome,  
With reverend tutor clad in habit lay,  
To tease for cash and quarrel with all day;  
With memorandum-book for every town,  
And every post, and where the chaise broke down;  
His stock, a few French phrases got by heart,  
With much to learn, but nothing to impart,  
The youth, obedient to his sire's commands,  
Sets off a wanderer into foreign lands.  
Surprised at all they meet, the gosling pair  
With awkward gait, stretched neck, and silly stare,  
Discover huge cathedrals built with stone,  
And steeples towering high much like our own;  
But show peculiar light by many a grin  
At popish practices observed within.

Ere long some bowing, smirking, smart Abbé  
Remarks two loiterers, that have lost their way ;  
And being always primed with *politesse*  
For men of their appearance and address,  
With much compassion undertakes the task  
To tell them more than they have wit to ask :  
Points to inscriptions wheresoever they tread,  
Such as, when legible, were never read.  
But, being cankered now, and half worn out,  
Craze antiquarian brains with endless doubt ;  
Some headless hero, or some Cæsar shews—  
Defective only in his Roman nose ;  
Exhibits elevations, drawings, plans,  
Models of Herculean pots and pans ;  
And sells them medals, which if neither rare  
Nor ancient, will be so, preserved with care.

Strange the recital ! from whatever cause  
His great improvement and new light he draws,  
The squire, once bathful, is shamefaced no more,  
But teems with powers he never felt before :  
Whether increased momentum, and the force,  
With which from clime to clime he sped his course,  
(As axles sometimes kindle as they go)  
Chafed him, and brought dull nature to a glow ;



Or whether clearer skies and softer air,  
That make Italian flowers so sweet and fair,  
Freshening his lazy spirits as he ran,  
Unfolded genially and spread the man;  
Returning he proclaims by many a grace,  
By shrugs and strange contortions of his face,  
How much a dunce that has been sent to roam,  
Excels a dunce that has been kept at home.

Accomplishments have taken virtue's place,  
And wisdom falls before exterior grace;  
We fling the precious kernel of the stone,  
And toil to polish its rough coat alone.  
A just deportment, manners graced with ease,  
Elegant phrase, and figure formed to please,  
Are qualities, that seem to comprehend  
Whatever parents, guardians, schools, intend;  
Hence an unfurnished and a listless mind,  
Though busy, trifling; empty, though refined;  
Hence all that interferes, and dares to clash  
With indolence and luxury, is trash:  
While learning, once the man's exclusive pride,  
Seems verging fast towards the female side.  
Learning itself, received into a mind  
By nature weak, or viciously inclined,



Serves but to lead philosophers astray,  
Where children would with ease discern the way.  
And of all arts sagacious dupes invent,  
To cheat themselves and gain the world's assent,  
The worst is—scripture warped from its intent.

The carriage bowls along, and all are pleased  
If Tom be sober, and the wheels well greased;  
But if the rogue have gone a cup too far,  
Left out his linch-pin, or forgot his tar,  
It suffers interruption and delay,  
And meets with hindrance in the smoothest way.  
When some hypothesis absurd and vain  
Has filled with all its fumes a critic's brain,  
The text, that suits not with his darling whim,  
Though plain to others, is obscure to him.  
The will made subject to a lawless force,  
All is irregular and out of course;  
And judgment drunk, and bribed to lose his way,  
Winks hard, and talks of darkness at noon-day.

A critic on the sacred book should be  
Candid and learned, dispassionate and free;  
Free from the wayward bias bigots feel,  
From fancy's influence, and intemperate zeal:

But above all, (or let the wretch refrain,  
Nor touch the page he cannot but profane)  
Free from the domineering power of lust;  
A lewd interpreter is never just.

How shall I speak thee, or thy power address,  
Thou god of our idolatry, the press?  
By thee religion, liberty, and laws,  
Exert their influence, and advance their cause;  
By thee worse plagues than Pharaoh's land beset,  
Diffused, make earth the vestibule of hell;  
Thou fountain, at which drink the good and wise;  
Thou ever-bubbling spring of endless lies;  
Like Eden's dread probationary tree,  
Knowledge of good and evil is from thee.

No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest,  
Till half mankind were like himself possessed.  
Philosophers, who darken and put out  
Eternal truth by everlasting doubt;  
Church quacks, with passions under no command,  
Who fill the world with doctrines contraband,  
Discoverers of they know not what, confined  
Within no bounds—the blind that lead the blind;  
To streams of popular opinion drawn,  
Deposit in those shallows all their spawn.



The wriggling fry soon fill the creeks around,  
Poisoning the waters where their swarms abound.  
Scorned by the nobler tenants of the flood,  
Minnows and gudgeons gorge the unwholesome  
food.

The propagated myriads spread so fast,  
Even Lewenhoeck himself would stand aghast,  
Employed to calculate the enormous sum,  
And own his crab-computing powers overcome.  
Is this hyperbole? The world well known,  
Your sober thoughts will hardly find it one.

Fresh confidence the speculatist takes  
From every hair-brained proselyte he makes;  
And therefore prints. Himself but half deceived,  
Till others have the soothing tale believed.  
Hence comment after comment spun as fine,  
As bloated spiders draw the flimsy line:  
Hence the same word, that bids our lusts obey,  
Is misapplied to sanctify their sway.  
If stubborn Greek refuse to be his friend,  
Hebrew or Syriac shall be forced to bend:  
If languages and copies all cry, No—  
Somebody proved it centuries ago.



Like trout pursued, the critic in despair  
Darts to the mud, and finds his safety there.  
Women, whom custom has forbid to fly  
The scholar's pitch, (the scholar best knows why)  
With all the simple and unlettered poor,  
Admire his learning, and almost adore.  
Whoever errs, the priest can never be wrong,  
With such fine words familiar to his tongue.

Ye ladies! (for indifferent in your cause,  
I should deserve to forfeit all applause)  
Whatever shocks or gives the least offence  
To virtue, delicacy, truth, or sense,  
(Try the criterion, 'tis a faithful guide)  
Nor has, nor can have, scripture on its side.

None but an author knows an author's cares,  
Or fancy's fondness for the child she bears.  
Committed once into the public arms,  
The baby seems to smile with added charms.  
Like something precious ventured far from shore,  
'Tis valued for the danger's sake the more.  
He views it with complacency supreme,  
Solicits kind attention to his dream;  
And daily more enamoured of the cheat,  
Kneels, and asks heaven to bless the dear deceit.

So one, whose story serves at least to show  
Men loved their own productions long ago,  
Wooded an unfeeling statue for his wife,  
Nor rested till the gods had given it life.  
If some mere driveller suck the sugared fib,  
One that still needs his leading string and bib,  
And praise his genius, he is soon repaid  
In praise applied to the same part—his head.  
For 'tis a rule, that holds for ever true,  
Grant me discernment, and I grant it you.

Patient of contradiction as a child,  
Affable, humble, diffident, and mild;  
Such was sir Isaac, and such Boyle and Locke:  
Your blunderer is as sturdy as a rock.  
The creature is so sure to kick and bite,  
A muleteer's the man to set him right.  
First appetite enlists him truth's sworn foe,  
Then obstinate self-will confirms him so.  
Tell him he wanders; that his error leads  
To fatal ills; that, though the path he treads  
Be flowery, and he see no cause of fear,  
Death and the pains of hell attend him there;  
In vain; the slave of arrogance and pride,  
He has no hearing on the prudent side.



His still refuted quirks he still repeats ;  
New raised objections with new quibbles meets !  
Till, sinking in the quicksand he defends,  
He dies disputing, and the contest ends—  
But not the mischiefs ; they, still left behind  
Like thistle-seeds, are sown by every wind.

Thus men go wrong with an ingenious skill ;  
Bend the straight rule to their own crooked will ;  
And with a clear and shining lamp supplied,  
First put it out, then take it for a guide.  
Halting on crutches of unequal size,  
One leg by truth supported, one by lies ;  
They fiddle to the goal with awkward pace,  
Secure of nothing—but to lose the race.

Faults in the life breed errors in the brain :  
And these reciprocally those again.  
The mind and conduct mutually imprint  
And stamp their image in each other's mint :  
Each, fire and dam, of an infernal race,  
Begetting and conceiving all that's base.

None sends his arrow to the mark in view,  
Whose hand is feeble, or his aim untrue.  
For though, ere yet the shaft is on the wing,  
Or when it first forsakes the elastic string,



It err but little from the intended line,  
It falls at last far wide of his design;  
So he, who seeks a mansion in the sky,  
Must watch his purpose with a steadfast eye;  
That prize belongs to none but the sincere,  
The least obliquity is fatal here.

With caution taste the sweet Circean cup:  
He that sips often at last drinks it up.  
Habits are soon assumed; but when we strive  
To strip them off, 'tis being flayed alive.  
Called to the temple of impure delight,  
He that abstains, and he alone, does right.  
If a wish wander that way, call it home;  
He cannot long be safe whose wishes roam.  
But if you pass the threshold, you are caught;  
Die then, if power Almighty save you not.  
There hardening by degrees, till double steeled,  
Take leave of nature's God, and God revealed;  
Then laugh at all you trembled at before;  
And, joining the free-thinkers brutal roar,  
Swallow the two grand nostrums they dispense—  
That scripture lies, and blasphemy is sense.  
If clemency revolted by abuse  
Be damnable, then damned without excuse.

Some dream that they can silence, when they will,  
The storm of passion, and say, *Peace, be still*;  
But “*Thus far and no farther*,” when addressed  
To the wild wave, or wilder human breast,  
Implies authority that never can,  
That never ought to be the lot of man.

But muse forbear; long flights forebode a fall;  
Strike on the deep-toned chord the sum of all.

Hear the just law—the judgment of the skies!  
He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies:  
And he that *will* be cheated to the last,  
Delusions strong as hell shall bind him fast.  
But if the wanderer his mistake discern,  
Judge his own ways, and sigh for a return,  
Bewildered once, must he bewail his loss  
For ever and for ever? No—the cross!  
There and there only (though the deist rave,  
And atheist, if earth bear so base a slave);  
There and there only is the power to save.  
There no delusive hope invites despair;  
No mockery meets you, no deception there.  
The spells and charms, that blinded you before,  
All vanish there, and fascinate no more.

I am no preacher, let this hint suffice—  
The cross once seen is death to every vice:  
Else he that hung there suffered all his pain,  
Bled, groaned, and agonized, and died, in vain.



## TRUTH.

*Pensantur trutinâ.*

HOR. Lib. II. Epist. I.

MAN, on the dubious waves of error tossed,  
His ship half foundered, and his compass lost,  
Sees, far as human optics may command,  
A sleeping fog, and fancies it dry land :  
Spreads all his canvass, every finew plies ;  
Pants for it, aims at it, enters it, and dies !  
Then farewell all self-satisfying schemes,  
His well-built systems, philosophic dreams ;  
Deceitful views of future bliss farewell !  
He reads his sentence at the flames of hell.

Hard lot of man—to toil for the reward  
Of virtue, and yet lose it ! Wherefore hard ?—  
He that would win the race must guide his horse  
Obedient to the customs of the course ;

Else, though unequalled to the goal he flies,  
 A meaner than himself shall gain the prize.  
 Grace leads the right way: if you choose the wrong,  
 Take it and perish; but restrain your tongue;  
 Charge not, with light sufficient, and left free,  
 Your wilful suicide on God's decree.

Oh how unlike the complex works of man,  
 Heaven's easy, artless, unincumbered plan!  
 No meretricious graces to beguile,  
 No clustering ornaments to clog the pile;  
 From ostentation as from weakness free,  
 It stands like the cerulean arch we see,  
 Majestic in its own simplicity. }  
 Inscribed above the portal, from afar  
 Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,  
 Legible only by the light they give,  
 Stand the soul-quickenings words—BELIEVE AND  
 LIVE.

Too many shocked at what should charm them most,  
 Despise the plain direction and are lost.  
 Heaven on such terms! (they cry with proud disdain)  
 Incredible, impossible, and vain!  
 Rebel, because 'tis easy to obey;  
 And scorn, for its own sake, the gracious way.



These are the sober, in whose cooler brains  
Some thought of immortality remains;  
The rest too busy or too gay to wait  
On the sad theme, their everlasting state,  
Sport for a day and perish in a night,  
The foam upon the waters not so light.

Who judged the Pharisee? What odious cause  
Exposed him to the vengeance of the laws?  
Had he seduced a virgin, wronged a friend,  
Or stabbed a man to serve some private end?  
Was blasphemy his sin? Or did he stray  
From the strict duties of the sacred day?  
Sit long and late at the carousing board?  
(Such were the sins with which he charged his Lord).  
No—the man's morals were exact, what then?  
'Twas his ambition to be seen of men;  
His virtues were his pride; and that one vice  
Made all his virtues gewgaws of no price;  
He wore them as fine trappings for a show,  
A praying, synagogue-frequenting beau.

The self-applauding bird, the peacock see—  
Mark what a sumptuous Pharisee is he!  
Meridian sun-beams tempt him to unfold  
His radiant glories, azure, green, and gold:



He treads as if, some solemn music near,  
 His measured step were governed by his ear;  
 And seems to say—Ye meaner fowl give place,  
 I am all splendour, dignity, and grace!

Not so the pheasant on his charms presumes,  
 Though he too has a glory in his plumes.

He, christian like, retreats with modest mien  
 To the close copse, or far-sequestered green,  
 And shines without desiring to be seen. }

The plea of works, as arrogant and vain,  
 Heaven turns from with abhorrence and disdain;  
 Not more affronted by avowed neglect,  
 Than by the mere dissembler's feigned respect.

What is all righteousness that men devise?

What—but a sordid bargain for the skies?

But Christ as soon would abdicate his own,  
 As stoop from heaven to sell the proud a throne.

His dwelling a recess in some rude rock,  
 Book, beads, and maple-dish, his meagre stock;  
 In shirt of hair and weeds of canvass dressed,  
 Girt with a bell-rope that the pope has blessed;  
 Aduft with stripes told out for every crime,  
 And sore tormented long before his time;  
 His prayer preferred to saints that cannot aid;  
 His praise postponed, and never to be paid;

See the sage hermit, by mankind admired,  
With all that bigotry adopts inspired,  
Wearing out life in his religious whim,  
Till his religious whimsy wears out him. -  
His works, his abstinence, his zeal allowed,  
You think him humble—God accounts him proud ;  
High in demand, though lowly in pretence,  
Of all his conduct this the genuine sense—  
My penitential stripes, my streaming blood,  
Have purchased heaven, and prove my title good.

Turn eastward now, and fancy shall apply  
To your weak sight her telescopic eye.  
The bramin kindles on his own bare head  
The sacred fire, self-torturing his trade,  
His voluntary pains, severe and long,  
Would give a barbarous air to British song;  
No grand inquisitor could worse invent,  
Than he contrives to suffer, well content.

Which is the faintlier worthy of the two ?  
Past all dispute, you anchorite say you.  
Your sentence and mine differ. What's a name ?  
I say the bramin has the fairer claim.  
If sufferings, scripture no where recommends,  
Devised by self to answer selfish ends,

Give faintship, then all Europe must agree  
Ten starveling hermits suffer less than he.

The truth is (if the truth may suit your ear,  
And prejudice have left a passage clear)  
Pride has attained its most luxuriant growth,  
And poisoned every virtue in them both.  
Pride may be pampered while the flesh grows lean ;  
Humility may clothe an English dean ;  
That grace was Cowper's—his, confessed by all—  
Though placed in golden Durham's second stall.  
Not all the plenty of a bishop's board,  
His palace, and his lacqueys, and "My Lord,"  
More nourish pride, that condescending vice,  
Than abstinence, and beggary, and lice ;  
It thrives in misery, and abundant grows  
In misery fools upon themselves impose.

But why before us, protestants, produce  
An Indian mystic, or a French recluse ?  
Their sin is plain ; but what have we to fear,  
Reformed and well instructed ? You shall hear.

Yon ancient prude, whose withered features show  
She might be young some forty years ago,  
Her elbows pinioned close upon her hips,  
Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,



Her eye-brows arched, her eyes both gone astray  
To watch yon amorous couple in their play,  
With bony and unkerchiefed neck defies  
The rude inclemency of wintry skies,  
And sails with lappet-head and mincing airs  
Duly at clink of bell to morning prayers.  
To thrift and parsimony much inclined,  
She yet allows herself that boy behind;  
The shivering urchin, bending as he goes,  
With flip-flop heels, and dew-drop at his nose;  
His predecessor's coat advanced to wear,  
Which future pages yet are doomed to share,  
Carries her bible tucked beneath his arm,  
And hides his hands to keep his fingers warm.

She, half an angel in her own account,  
Doubts not hereafter with the saints to mount,  
Though not a grace appears on strictest search,  
But that she fasts, and *item*, goes to church.  
Conscious of age she recollects her youth,  
And tells, not always with an eye to truth,  
Who spanned her waist, and who, wherever he came  
Scrawled upon glass miss Bridget's lovely name;  
Who stole her slipper, filled it with tokay,  
And drank the little bumper every day.

Of temper as envenomed as an asp,  
Censorious, and her every word a wasp;  
In faithful memory she records the crimes  
Or real or fictitious, of the times;  
Laughs at the reputations she has torn,  
And holds them dangling at arms length in scorn.

Such are the fruits of sanctimonious pride,  
Of malice fed while flesh is mortified:  
Take, Madam, the reward of all your prayers,  
Where hermits and where bramins meet with theirs;  
Your portion is with them.—Nay, never frown.  
But, if you please, some fathoms lower down.

Artist attend—your brushes and your paint—  
Produce them—take a chair—now draw a Saint.  
Oh sorrowful and sad! the streaming tears  
Channel her cheeks—a Niobe appears!  
Is this a Saint? Throw tints and all away—  
True piety is cheerful as the day,  
Will weep indeed and heave a pitying groan  
For others' woes, but smiles upon her own.

What purpose has the King of saints in view?  
Why falls the gospel like a gracious dew?  
To call up plenty from the teeming earth,  
Or curse the desert with a tenfold dearth?



Is it that Adam's offspring may be saved  
From servile fear, or be the more enslaved?  
To loose the links that galled mankind before,  
Or bind them faster on, and add still more?  
The freeborn Christian has no chains to prove,  
Or, if a chain, the golden one of love:  
No fear attends to quench his glowing fires,  
What fear he feels his gratitude inspires.  
Shall he for such deliverance freely wrought,  
Recompense ill? He trembles at the thought.  
His master's interest and his own combined  
Prompt every movement of his heart and mind:  
Thought, word, and deed, his liberty evince,  
His freedom is the freedom of a prince.

Man's obligations infinite, of course  
His life should prove that he perceives their force;  
His utmost he can render is but small—  
The principle and motive all in all.  
You have two servants—Tom, an arch, sly rogue,  
From top to toe the Geta now in vogue,  
Genteel in figure, easy in address,  
Moves without noise, and swift as an express,  
Reports a message with a pleasing grace,  
Expert in all the duties of his place;



Say, on what hinge does his obedience move ?  
Has he a world of gratitude and love ?  
No, not a spark—'tis all mere sharper's play ;  
He likes your house, your housemaid, and your  
pay ?

Reduce his wages, or get rid of her,  
Tom quits you, with—Your most obedient, Sir.

The dinner served, Charles takes his usual stand,  
Watches your eye, anticipates command ;  
Sighs if perhaps your appetite should fail ;  
And if he but suspects a frown, turns pale ;  
Consults all day your interest and your ease,  
Richly rewarded if he can but please ;  
And, proud to make his firm attachment known,  
To save your life would nobly risk his own.

Now which stands highest in your serious  
thought ?

Charles, without doubt, say you—and so he ought ;  
One act, that from a thankful heart proceeds,  
Excels ten thousand mercenary deeds.

Thus heaven approves as honest and sincere  
The work of generous love and filial fear ;  
But with averted eyes the omniscient Judge  
Scorns the base hireling, and the slavish drudge.

Where dwell these matchless saints?—Old  
Curio cries.

Even at your side, Sir, and before your eyes,  
The favoured few—the enthusiasts you despise.

And pleased at heart because on holy ground  
Sometimes a canting hypocrite is found,  
Reproach a people with his single fall,  
And cast his filthy raiment at them all.  
Attend!—an apt similitude shall show  
Whence springs the conduct that offends you so.

See where it smokes along the founding plain,  
Blown all afloat, a driving, dashing rain,  
Peal upon peal redoubling all around,  
Shakes it again and faster to the ground;  
Now flashing wide, now glancing as in play,  
Swift beyond thought the lightnings dart away.  
Ere yet it came the traveller urged his steed,  
And hurried, but with unsuccessful speed;  
Now drenched throughout, and hopeless of his case,  
He drops the rein, and leaves him to his pace.  
Suppose, unlooked for in a scene so rude,  
Long hid by interposing hill or wood,  
Some mansion, neat and elegantly dressed,  
By some kind hospitable heart possessed,  
Offer him warmth, security, and rest;



Think with what pleasure, safe and at his ease,  
He hears the tempest howling in the trees ;  
What glowing thanks his lips and heart employ,  
While danger past is turned to present joy.  
So fares it with the sinner, when he feels  
A growing dread of vengeance at his heels :  
His conscience, like a glassy lake before,  
Lashed into foaming waves begins to roar ;  
The law grown clamorous, though silent long,  
Arraigns him—charges him with every wrong—  
Asserts the rights of his offended Lord,  
And death or restitution is the word :  
The last impossible, he fears the first,  
And, having well deserved, expects the worst.  
Then welcome refuge, and a peaceful home ;  
Oh for a shelter from the wrath to come !  
Crush me ye rocks ; ye falling mountains hide,  
Or bury me in ocean's angry tide.—  
The scrutiny of those all-seeing eyes  
I dare not—And you need not, God replies ;  
The remedy you want I freely give :  
The book shall teach you—read, believe, and live !  
'Tis done—the raging storm is heard no more,  
Mercy receives him on her peaceful shore :



And Justice, guardian of the dread command,  
Drops the red vengeance from his willing hand.  
A soul redeemed demands a life of praise ;  
Hence the complexion of his future days,  
Hence a demeanour holy and unspeckt,  
And the world's hatred, as its sure effect.

Some lead a life unblameable and just,  
Their own dear virtue their unshaken trust :  
They never sin—or if (as all offend)  
Some trivial slips their daily walk attend,  
The poor are near at hand, the charge is small,  
A slight gratuity atones for all.  
For though the pope has lost his interest here,  
And pardons are not sold as once they were,  
No papist more desirous to compound,  
Than some grave sinners upon English ground.  
That plea refuted, other quirks they seek—  
Mercy is infinite, and man is weak ;  
The future shall obliterate the past,  
And heaven no doubt shall be their home at last.  
Come then—a still, small whisper in your ear—  
He has no hope who never had a fear ;  
And he that never doubted of his state,  
He may perhaps—perhaps he may—too late.

The path to blifs abounds with many a snare;  
Learning is one, and wit, however rare.  
The Frenchman, first in literary fame,  
(Mention him if you please. Voltaire? — The  
fame.)

With spirit, genius, eloquence, supplied,  
Lived long, wrote much, laughed heartily, and died;  
The scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew  
*Bon mots* to gall the Christian and the Jew;  
An infidel in health, but what when sick?  
Oh—then a text would touch him at the quick :  
View him at Paris in his last career,  
Surrounding throngs the demi-god revere,  
Exalted on his pedestal of pride,  
And fumed with frankincense on every side,  
He begs their flattery with his latest breath,  
And smothered in't at last, is praised to death:

Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,  
Pillow and bobbins all her little store;  
Content though mean, and cheerful if not gay,  
Shuffling her threads about the live-long day,  
Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night  
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light;

She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,  
Has little understanding, and no wit,  
Receives no praise; but, though her lot be such,  
(Toilsome and indigent) she renders much;  
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true —  
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew;  
And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes  
Her title to a treasure in the skies.

Oh happy peasant! Oh unhappy bard!  
His the mere tinsel, her's the rich reward;  
He praised perhaps for ages yet to come,  
She never heard of half a mile from home:  
He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,  
She safe in the simplicity of her's.

Not many wise, rich, noble, or profound  
In science, win one inch of heavenly ground.  
And is it not a mortifying thought  
The poor should gain it, and the rich should not?  
No—the voluptuaries, who never forget  
One pleasure lost, lose heaven without regret;  
Regret would rouse them, and give birth to prayer,  
Prayer would add faith, and faith would fix them  
there.



Not that the Former of us all in this,  
Or aught he does, is governed by caprice;  
The supposition is replete with sin,  
And bears the brand of blasphemy burnt in.  
Not so—the silver trumpet's heavenly call  
Sounds for the poor, but sounds alike for all:  
Kings are invited, and would kings obey,  
No slaves on earth more welcome were than they:  
But royalty, nobility, and state,  
Are such a dead preponderating weight,  
That endless bliss (how strange soever it seem)  
In counterpoise, flies up and kicks the beam.  
'Tis open, and ye cannot enter—why?  
Because ye will not, Conyers would reply—  
And he says much that many may dispute  
And cavil at with ease, but none refute.  
Oh blessed effect of penury and want,  
The seed sown there, how vigorous is the plant!  
No soil like poverty for growth divine,  
As leanest land supplies the richest wine.  
Earth gives too little, giving only bread,  
To nourish pride, or turn the weakest head:  
To them the founding jargon of the schools  
Seems what it is—a cap and bell for fools:

The light they walk by, kindled from above,  
Shows them the shortest way to life and love:  
They, strangers to the controversial field,  
Where deists, always foiled, yet scorn to yield,  
And never checked by what impedes the wise,  
Believe, rush forward, and possess the prize.

Envy, ye great, the dull unlettered small:  
Ye have much cause for envy—but not all.  
We boast some rich ones whom the gospel sways,  
And one who wears a coronet and prays;  
Like gleanings of an olive-tree they show,  
Here and there one upon the topmost bough.

How readily upon the gospel plan,  
That question has its answer—What is man?  
Sinful and weak, in every sense a wretch;  
An instrument, whose chords upon the stretch,  
And strained to the last screw that he can bear,  
Yield only discord in his Maker's ear:  
Once the blest residence of truth divine,  
Glorious as Solyma's interior shrine,  
Where, in his own oracular abode,  
Dwelt visibly the light-creating God;  
But made long since, like Babylon of old,  
A den of mischiefs never to be told:



And she, once mistress of the realms around,  
Now scattered wide and no where to be found,  
As soon shall rise and re-ascend the throne,  
By native power and energy her own,  
As nature at her own peculiar cost,  
Restore to man the glories he has lost.  
Go—bid the winter cease to chill the year,  
Replace the wandering comet in his sphere,  
Then boast (but wait for that unhopèd for hour)  
The self-restoring arm of human power.  
But what is man in his own proud esteem?  
Hear him—himself the poet and the theme:  
A monarch clothed with majesty and awe,  
His mind his kingdom, and his will his law,  
Grace in his mien, and glory in his eyes,  
Supreme on earth, and worthy of the skies,  
Strength in his heart, dominion in his nod,  
And, thunderbolts excepted, quite a God!

So sings he, charmed with his own mind and form,  
The song magnificent—the theme a worm!  
Himself so much the source of his delight,  
His Maker has no beauty in his sight.  
See where he sits contemplative and fixt,  
Pleasure and wonder in his features mixt:



His passions tamed and all at his controul,  
How perfect the composure of his soul !  
Complacency has breathed a gentle gale  
Over all his thoughts, and swelled his easy sail :  
His books well trimmed and in the gayest style,  
Like regimented coxcombs rank and file,  
Adorn his intellects as well as shelves,  
And teach him notions splendid as themselves :  
The Bible only stands neglected there,  
Though that of all most worthy of his care ;  
And like an infant troublesome awake,  
Is left to sleep for peace and quiet sake.

What shall the man deserve of human kind,  
Whose happy skill and industry combined  
Shall prove (what argument could never yet)  
The Bible an imposture and a cheat ?  
The praises of the libertine professed,  
The worst of men, and curses of the best.  
Where should the living, weeping over his woes,  
The dying, trembling at the awful close,  
Where the betrayed, forsaken, and oppressed,  
The thousands whom the world forbids to rest,  
Where should they find, (those comforts at an end  
The scripture yields) or hope to find, a friend ?

Sorrow might muse herself to madness then,  
And seeking exile from the sight of men,  
Bury herself in solitude profound,  
Grow frantic with her pangs and bite the ground.  
Thus often unbelief, grown sick of life,  
Flies to the tempting pool, or felon knife.  
The jury meet, the coroner is short,  
And lunacy the verdict of the court;  
Reverse the sentence, let the truth be known,  
Such lunacy is ignorance alone;  
They knew not, what some bishops may not know,  
That scripture is the only cure of woe;  
That field of promise, how it flings abroad  
Its odour over the Christian's thorny road!  
The soul, reposing on assured relief,  
Feels herself happy amidst all her grief,  
Forgets her labour as she toils along,  
Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song.

But the same word, that, like the polished share,  
Ploughs up the roots of a believer's care,  
Kills too the flowery weeds, where'er they grow,  
That bind the sinner's Bacchanalian brow.  
Oh that unwelcome voice of heavenly love,  
Sad messenger of mercy from above!



How does it grate upon his thankless ear,  
Crippling his pleasures with the cramp of fear!  
His will and judgment at continual strife,  
That civil war imbitters all his life:  
In vain he points his powers against the skies,  
In vain he closes or averts his eyes,  
Truth will intrude—she bids him yet beware;  
And shakes the sceptic in the scorner's chair.

Though various foes against the truth combine,  
Pride above all opposes her design;  
Pride, of a growth superior to the rest,  
The subtlest serpent with the loftiest crest,  
Swells at the thought, and kindling into rage,  
Would hiss the cherub mercy from the stage.

And is the soul indeed so lost?—she cries,  
Fallen from her glory and too weak to rise?  
Torpid and dull beneath a frozen zone,  
Has she no spark that may be deemed her own?  
Grant her indebted to what zealots call  
Grace undeserved, yet surely not for all—  
Some beams of rectitude she yet displays,  
Some love of virtue, and some power to praise;  
Can lift herself above corporeal things,  
And, soaring on her own unborrowed wings,



Possess herself of all that's good or true,  
Assert the skies, and vindicate her due.  
Past indiscretion is a venial crime,  
And if the youth, unmellowed yet by time,  
Bore on his branch luxuriant then and rude  
Fruits of a blighted size, austere and crude,  
Maturer years shall happier stores produce,  
And meliorate the well concocted juice.  
Then, conscious of her meritorious zeal,  
To justice she may make her bold appeal,  
And leave to mercy with a tranquil mind,  
The worthless and unfruitful of mankind.  
Hear then how mercy, slighted and defied,  
Retorts the affront against the crown of pride.

Perish the virtue, as it ought, abhorred,  
And the fool with it, who insults his Lord.  
The atonement, a Redeemer's love has wrought,  
Is not for you—the righteous need it not.  
Seest thou yon harlot wooing all she meets,  
The worn-out nuisance of the public streets,  
Herself from morn to night, from night to morn,  
Her own abhorrence, and as much your scorn;  
The gracious shower, unlimited and free,  
Shall fall on her, when heaven denies it thee.

Of all that wisdom dictates, this the drift,  
That man is dead in sin, and life a gift.

Is virtue then, unless of Christian growth,  
Mere fallacy, or foolishness, or both ?  
Ten thousand fages lost in endless woe,  
For ignorance of what they could not know ?  
That speech betrays at once a bigot's tongue,  
Charge not a God with such outrageous wrong.  
Truly not I—the partial light men have,  
My creed persuades me, well employed, may save ;  
While he that scorns the noon-day beam, perverse,  
Shall find the blessing unimproved a curse.  
Let heathen worthies, whose exalted mind  
Left sensuality and dross behind,  
Possess for me their undisputed lot,  
And take unenvied the reward they fought.  
But still in virtue of a Saviour's plea,  
Not blind by choice, but destined not to see.  
Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame  
Celestial, though they knew not whence it came,  
Derived from the same source of light and grace,  
That guides the Christian in his swifter race ;  
Their judge was conscience, and her rule their law,  
That rule, pursued with reverence and with awe,

Led them, however faltering, faint, and slow,  
From what they knew, to what they wished to know.  
But let not him that shares a brighter day,  
Traduce the splendour of a noon-tide ray,  
Prefer the twilight of a darker time,  
And deem his base stupidity no crime;  
The wretch, who flights the bounty of the skies,  
And sinks, while favoured with the means to rise,  
Shall find them rated at their full amount,  
The good he scorned all carried to account.

Marshalling all his terrors as he came,  
Thunder, and earthquake, and devouring flame,  
From Sinai's top Jehovah gave the law,  
Life for obedience, death for every flaw.  
When the great Sovereign would his will express,  
He gives a perfect rule; what can he less?  
And guards it with a sanction as severe  
As vengeance can inflict, or sinners fear:  
Else his own glorious rights he would disclaim,  
And man might safely trifle with his name.  
He bids him glow with unremitting love  
To all on earth, and to himself above;  
Condemns the injurious deed, the slanderous tongue,  
The thought that meditates a brother's wrong:



Brings not alone the more conspicuous part,  
His conduct to the test; but tries his heart.

Hark ! universal nature shook and groaned,  
'Twas the last trumpet—see the Judge enthroned :  
Rouse all your courage at your utmost need,  
Now summon every virtue, stand and plead.  
What ! silent ? Is your boasting heard no more ?  
That self-renouncing wisdom, learned before,  
Had shed immortal glories on your brow,  
That all your virtues cannot purchase now.

All joy to the believer ! He can speak—  
Trembling yet happy, confident yet meek.

Since the dear hour that brought me to thy foot,  
And cut up all my follies by the root,  
I never trusted in an arm but thine,  
Nor hoped, but in thy righteousness divine :  
My prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled,  
Were but the feeble efforts of a child  
However performed, it was their brightest part  
That they proceeded from a grateful heart :  
Cleansed in thine own all-purifying blood,  
Forgive their evil, and accept their good ;  
I cast them at thy feet—my only plea  
Is what it was, dependence upon thee,

While struggling in the vale of tears below,  
That never failed, nor shall it fail me now.

Angelic gratulations rend the skies,  
Pride falls unpitied, never more to rise,  
Humility is crowned, and faith receives the prize. }

## EXPOSTULATION.

*Tantane, tam patiens, nullo certamine tolli  
Dona sines?*

VIRG.

WHY weeps the muse for England? What appears  
In England's case to move the muse to tears?  
From side to side of her delightful isle,  
Is she not clothed with a perpetual smile?  
Can nature add a charm, or art confer  
A new found luxury not seen in her?  
Where under heaven is pleasure more pursued,  
Or where does cold reflection less intrude?  
Her fields a rich expanse of wavy corn,  
Poured out from plenty's overflowing horn;  
Ambrosial gardens, in which art supplies  
The fervour and the force of Indian skies;



Her peaceful shores, where busy commerce waits  
To pour his golden tide through all her gates;  
Whom fiery suns, that scorch the ruffet spice  
Of eastern groves, and oceans floored with ice  
Forbid in vain to push his daring way  
To darker climes, or climes of brighter day;  
Whom the winds waft wherever e billow's roll,  
From the world's girdle to the frozen pole;  
The chariots bounding in her wheel-worn streets,  
Her vaults below, where every vintage meets;  
Her theatres, her revels, and her sports;  
The scenes to which not youth alone resorts,  
But age, in spite of weakness and of pain,  
Still haunts, in hope to dream of youth again;  
All speak her happy: let the muse look round  
From East to West, no sorrow can be found:  
Or only what, in cottages confined,  
Sighs unregarded to the passing wind.  
Then wherefore weep for England? What appears  
In England's case to move the muse to tears?

The prophet wept for Israel: withed his eyes  
Were fountains fed with infinite supplies:  
For Israel dealt in robbery and wrong:  
There were the scorner's and the slanderer's tongue;

Oaths, used as playthings or convenient tools,  
As interest biaſſed knaves, or faſhion fools ;  
Adultery, neighing at his neighbour's door ;  
Oppreſſion, labouring hard to grind the poor :  
The partial balance, and deceitful weight ;  
The treacherous ſmile, a mask for ſecret hate ;  
Hypocriſy, formality in prayer,  
And the dull ſervice of the lip were there.  
Her women, inſolent and ſelf-careſſed,  
By vanity's unwearied finger dreſſed,  
Forgot the bluſh, that virgin fears impart  
To modeſt cheeks, and borrowed one from art ;  
Were juſt ſuch trifles, without worth or uſe,  
As ſilly pride and idleneſs produce ;  
Curled, ſcented, furbelowed, and flounced around,  
With feet too delicate to touch the ground  
They ſtretched the neck, and rolled the wanton eye,  
And ſighed for every fool that fluttered by.

He ſaw his people ſlaves to every luſt,  
Lewd, avaricious, arrogant, unjuſt ;  
He heard the wheels of an avenging God  
Groan heavily along the diſtant road ;  
Saw Babylon ſet wide her two-leaved braſs  
To let the military deluge paſs ;

Jerusalem a prey, her glory soiled,  
Her princes captive, and her treasures spoiled;  
Wept till all Israel heard his bitter cry,  
Stamped with his foot, and smote upon his thigh :  
But wept, and stamped, and smote his thigh in  
vain,

Pleasure is deaf when told of future pain,  
And sounds prophetic are too rough to suit  
Ears long accustomed to the pleasing lute ;  
They scorned his inspiration and his theme,  
Pronounced him frantic, and his fears a dream ;  
With self-indulgence winged the fleeting hours,  
Till the foe found them, and down fell the towers.

Long time Assyria bound them in her chain,  
Till penitence had purged the public stain,  
And Cyrus, with relenting pity moved,  
Returned them happy to the land they loved ;  
There, proof against prosperity, awhile  
They stood the test of her ensnaring smile,  
And had the grace in scenes of peace to show  
The virtue, they had learned in scenes of woe.  
But man is frail, and can but ill sustain  
A long immunity from grief and pain ;



And after all the joys that plenty leads,  
With tip-toe step vice silently succeeds.

When he that ruled them with a shepherd's rod,  
In form a man, in dignity a God,  
Came, not expected in that humble guise,  
To sift and search them with unerring eyes,  
He found, concealed beneath a fair outside,  
The filth of rottenness and worm of pride;  
Their piety a system of deceit,  
Scripture employed to sanctify the cheat;  
The pharisee the dupe of his own art,  
Self-idolized and yet a knave at heart.

When nations are to perish in their sins,  
'Tis in the church the leprosy begins;  
The priest, whose office is with zeal sincere  
To watch the fountain, and preserve it clear,  
Carelessly nods and sleeps upon the brink,  
While others poison what the flock must drink;  
Or, waking at the call of lust alone,  
Infuses lies and errors of his own;  
His unsuspecting sheep believe it pure:  
And, tainted by the very means of cure,  
Catch from each other a contagious spot,  
The foul fore-runner of a general rot.

Then truth is hushed that heresy may preach,  
And all is trash that reason cannot teach,  
Then God's own image on the soul imprest  
Becomes a mockery, and a standing jest;  
And faith, the root whence only can arise  
The graces of a life that wins the skies,  
Loses at once all value and esteem,  
Pronounced by grey beards a pernicious dream:  
Then ceremony leads her bigots forth,  
Prepared to fight for shadows of no worth;  
While truths, on which eternal things depend,  
Find not, or hardly find, a single friend:  
As soldiers watch the signal of command,  
They learn to bow, to kneel, to sit, to stand;  
Happy to fill religion's vacant place  
With hollow form, and gesture, and grimace.

Such, when the teacher of his church was there,  
People and priest, the sons of Israel were;  
Stiff in the letter, lax in the design  
And import, of their oracles divine;  
Their learning legendary, false, absurd,  
And yet exalted above God's own word;  
They drew a curse from an intended good,  
Puffed up with gifts they never understood.

He judged them with as terrible a frown,  
As if not love, but wrath, had brought him down:  
Yet he was gentle as soft summer airs,  
Had grace for others' sins, but none for theirs;  
Through all he spoke a noble plainness ran—  
Rhetoric is artifice, the work of man;  
And tricks and turns that fancy may devise,  
Are far too mean for him, that rules the skies.  
The astonished vulgar trembled while he tore  
The mask from faces never seen before;  
He stripped the impostors in the noon-day sun,  
Showed that they followed all they seemed to shun;  
Their prayers made public, their excesses kept  
As private as the chambers where they slept;  
The temple and its holy rites profaned  
By mummeries, he that dwelt in it disdained;  
Uplifted hands that at convenient times  
Could act extortion and the worst of crimes,  
Washed with a neatness scrupulously nice,  
And free from every taint but that of vice.  
Judgment however tardy, mends her pace  
When obstinacy once has conquered grace.  
They saw distemper healed, and life restored,  
In answer to the fiat of his word;



Confessed the wonder, and with daring tongue  
Blasphemed the authority from which it sprung.  
They knew by sure prognostics seen on high,  
The future tone and temper of the sky ;  
But, grave dissemblers ! could not understand  
That sin let loose speaks punishment at hand.

Ask now of history's authentic page,  
And call up evidence from every age ;  
Display with busy and laborious hand  
The blessings of the most indebted land ;  
What nation will you find, whose annals prove  
So rich an interest in almighty love ?  
Where dwell they now, where dwelt in ancient day  
A people planted, watered, blest, as they ?  
Let Egypt's plagues and Canaan's woes proclaim  
The favours poured upon the Jewish name ;  
Their freedom purchased for them at the cost  
Of all, their hard oppressors valued most ;  
Their title to a country not their own  
Made sure by prodigies till then unknown ;  
For them the states, they left, made waste and void ;  
For them the states, to which they went, destroyed ;  
A cloud to measure out their march by day,  
By night a fire to cheer the gloomy way ;

That moving signal summoning, when best,  
Their host to move, and when it stayed, to rest.  
For them the rocks dissolved into a flood,  
The dews condensed into angelic food,  
Their very garments sacred, old yet new,  
And Time forbid to touch them as he flew;  
Streams, swelled above the bank, enjoined to stand,  
While they passed through to their appointed land;  
Their leader armed with meekness, zeal, and love,  
And graced with clear credentials from above;  
Themselves secured beneath the Almighty wing;  
Their God their captain\*, lawgiver, and king;  
Crowned with a thousand victories, and at last  
Lords of the conquered foil, there rooted fast,  
In peace possessing what they won by war,  
Their name far published, and revered as far;  
Where will you find a race like theirs, endowed  
With all that man ever wished, or heaven be-  
flowed?

They, and they only, amongst all mankind  
Received the transcript of the eternal mind;  
Were trusted with his own engraven laws,  
And constituted guardians of his cause;

\* Vide Joshua, v. 14.

Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,  
And theirs by birth the Saviour of us all.  
In vain the nations, that had seen them rise  
With fierce and envious yet admiring eyes,  
Had fought to crush them, guarded as they were  
By power divine, and skill that could not err.  
Had they maintained allegiance firm and sure,  
And kept the faith immaculate and pure,  
Then the proud eagles of all-conquering Rome  
Had found one city not to be overcome;  
And the twelve standards of the tribes unfurled  
Had bid defiance to the warring world.  
But grace abused brings forth the foulest deeds,  
As richest soil the most luxuriant weeds.  
Cured of the golden calves, their fathers' sin,  
They set up self, that idol god within;  
Viewed a Deliverer with disdain and hate,  
Who left them still a tributary state;  
Seized fast his hand, held out to set them free  
From a worse yoke, and nailed it to the tree:  
There was the consummation and the crown,  
The flower of Israel's infamy full blown;  
Thence date their sad declension and their fall,  
Their woes not yet repealed, thence date them all.



Thus fell the best instructed in her day,  
And the most favoured land, look where we may.  
Philosophy indeed on Grecian eyes  
Had poured the day, and cleared the Roman skies;  
In other climes perhaps creative art,  
With power surpassing their's, performed her part,  
Might give more life to marble, or might fill  
The glowing tablets with a juster skill,  
Might shine in fable, and grace idle themes  
With all the embroidery of poetic dreams;  
'Twas their's alone to dive into the plan,  
That truth and mercy had revealed to man;  
And while the world beside, that plan unknown,  
Deified useless wood, or senseless stone,  
They breathed in faith their well-directed prayers,  
And the true God, the God of truth, was their's.

Their glory faded, and their race dispersed,  
The last of nations now, though once the first;  
They warn and teach the proudest, would they learn,  
Keep wisdom, or meet vengeance in your turn:  
If we escaped not, if Heaven spared not us,  
Peeled, scattered, and exterminated thus;  
If vice received her retribution due  
When we were visited, what hope for you?

When God arises with an awful frown  
To punish lust, or pluck presumption down;  
When gifts perverted, or not duly prized,  
Pleasure overvalued, and his grace despised,  
Provoke the vengeance of his righteous hand  
To pour down wrath upon a thankless land;  
He will be found impartially severe,  
Too just to wink, or speak the guilty clear.

Oh Israel, of all nations most undone!  
Thy diadem displaced, thy sceptre gone;  
Thy temple, once thy glory, fallen and rased,  
And thou a worshipper even where thou mayest;  
Thy services once only without spot,  
Mere shadows now, their ancient pomp forgot;  
Thy Levites, once a consecrated host,  
No longer Levites, and their lineage lost,  
And thou thyself over every country sown,  
With none on earth that thou canst call thine own;  
Cry aloud thou that fittest in the dust,  
Cry to the proud, the cruel, and unjust;  
Knock at the gates of nations, rouse their fears;  
Say wrath is coming, and the storm appears;  
But raise the shrillest cry in British ears.

What ails thee, restless as the waves that roar,  
And fling their foam against thy chalky shore?  
Mistress, at least while Providence shall please,  
And trident-bearing queen of the wide seas—  
Why, having kept good faith, and often shown  
Friendship and truth to others, findest thou none?  
Thou that hast set the persecuted free,  
None interposes now to succour thee.  
Countries indebted to thy power, that shine  
With light derived from thee, would smother thine:  
Thy very children watch for thy disgrace—  
A lawless brood, and curse thee to thy face.  
Thy rulers load thy credit, year by year,  
With sums Peruvian mines could never clear;  
As if, like arches built with skilful hand,  
The more 'twere prest the firmer it would stand.  
The cry in all thy ships is still the same,  
Speed us away to battle and to fame.  
Thy mariners explore the wild expanse,  
Impatient to descry the flags of France:  
But, though they fight as thine have ever fought,  
Return ashamed without the wreaths they sought.  
Thy senate is a scene of civil jar,  
Chaos of contrarieties at war;



Where sharp and solid, phlegmatic and light,  
Discordant atoms meet, ferment, and fight;  
Where obstinacy takes his sturdy stand,  
To disconcert what policy has planned;  
Where policy is busied all night long  
In setting right what faction has set wrong;  
Where flails of oratory thresh the floor,  
That yields them chaff and dust, and nothing more.  
Thy racked inhabitants repine, complain,  
Taxed till the brow of labour sweats in vain;  
War lays a burthen on the reeling state,  
And peace does nothing to relieve the weight;  
Successive loads succeeding broils impose,  
And fighting millions prophesy the close.

Is adverse providence, when pondered well,  
So dimly writ, or difficult to spell,  
Thou canst not read with readiness and ease  
Providence adverse in events like these?  
Know then that heavenly wisdom on this ball  
Creates, gives birth to, guides, consummates all;  
That, while laborious and quick-thoughted man  
Snuffs up the praise of what he seems to plan,  
He first conceives, then perfects his design,  
As a mere instrument in hands divine:

Blind to the working of that secret power,  
That balances the wings of every hour,  
The busy trifler dreams himself alone,  
Frames many a purpose, and God works his own.  
States thrive or wither as moons wax and wane,  
Even as his will and his decrees ordain;  
While honour, virtue, piety bear sway,  
They flourish; and as these decline, decay.  
In just resentment of his injured laws,  
He pours contempt on them and on their cause;  
Strikes the rough thread of error right athwart  
The web of every scheme they have at heart;  
Bids rottenness invade and bring to dust  
The pillars of support, in which they trust,  
And do his errand of disgrace and shame  
On the chief strength and glory of the frame.  
None ever yet impeded what he wrought,  
None bars him out from his most secret thought:  
Darkness itself before his eye is light,  
And hell's close mischief naked in his sight.

Stand now and judge thyself.—Hast thou incurred

His anger, who can waste thee with a word,

Who poises and proportions sea and land,  
Weighing them in the hollow of his hand,  
And in whose awful sight all nations seem  
As grasshoppers, as dust, a drop, a dream?  
Hast thou (a sacrilege his soul abhors)  
Claimed all the glory of thy prosperous wars?  
Proud of thy fleets and armies, stolen the gem  
Of his just praise, to lavish it on them?  
Hast thou not learned, what thou art often told,  
A truth still sacred, and believed of old,  
That no success attends on spears and swords  
Unblest, and that the battle is the Lord's?  
That courage is his creature, and dismay  
The post, that at his bidding speeds away,  
Ghastly in feature, and his flammering tongue,  
With doleful rumour and sad presage hung,  
To quell the valour of the stoutest heart,  
And teach the combatant a woman's part?  
That he bids thousands fly when none pursue,  
Saves as he will by many or by few,  
And claims for ever, as his royal right,  
The event and sure decision of the fight?  
Hast thou, though suckled at fair freedom's breast,  
Exported slavery to the conquered East,



Pulled down the tyrants India served with dread,  
And raised thyself, a greater in their stead?  
Gone thither armed and hungry, returned full,  
Fed from the richest veins of the Mogul,  
A despot big with power obtained by wealth,  
And that obtained by rapine and by stealth?  
With Asiatic vices stored thy mind,  
But left their virtues and thine own behind;  
And, having trucked thy soul, brought home the fee,  
To tempt the poor to sell himself to thee?

Hast thou by statute shoved from its design  
The Saviour's feast, his own blest bread and wine,  
And made the symbols of atoning grace  
An office key, a picklock to a place,  
That infidels may prove their title good  
By an oath dipped in sacramental blood?  
A blot that will be still a blot, in spite  
Of all that grave apologists may write:  
And though a bishop toil to cleanse the stain,  
He wipes and scours the silver cup in vain.  
And hast thou sworn on every slight pretence,  
Till perjuries are common as bad pence,  
While thousands, careless of the damning sin,  
Kiss the book's outside, who never looked within?

Hast thou, when heaven has clothed thee with  
disgrace,

And long provoked, repaid thee to thy face,  
(For thou hast known eclipses, and endured  
Dimness and anguish, all thy beams obscured,  
When sin has shed dishonour on thy brow;  
And never of a sabler hue than now)  
Hast thou, with heart perverse and conscience seared,  
Despising all rebuke, still persevered,  
And having chosen evil, scorned the voice  
That cried, Repent!—and gloried in thy choice?  
Thy fastings, when calamity at last  
Suggests the expedient of a yearly fast,  
What mean they? Canst thou dream there is a  
power

In lighter diet at a later hour,  
To charm to sleep the threatening of the skies,  
And hide past folly from all-seeing eyes?  
The fast, that wins deliverance, and suspends  
The stroke, that a vindictive God intends,  
Is to renounce hypocrisy; to draw  
Thy life upon the pattern of the law;  
To war with pleasure idolized before;  
To vanquish lust, and wear its yoke no more.

All fasting else, whatever be the pretence,  
Is wooing mercy by renewed offence.

Haft thou within thee sin, that in old time  
Brought fire from heaven, the sex-abusing crime,  
Whose horrid perpetration stamps disgrace,  
Baboons are free from, upon human race ?  
Think on the fruitful and well-watered spot,  
That fed the flocks and herds of wealthy Lot,  
Where Paradise seemed still vouchsafed on earth,  
Burning and scorched into perpetual dearth,  
Or, in his words who damned the base desire,  
Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire :  
Then nature injured, scandalized, defiled,  
Unveiled her blushing cheek, looked on, and smiled ;  
Beheld with joy the lovely scene defaced,  
And praised the wrath, that laid her beauties waste.

Far be the thought from any verse of mine,  
And farther still the formed and fixed design,  
To thrust the charge of deeds, that I detest,  
Against an innocent unconscious breast :  
The man that dares traduce, because he can  
With safety to himself, is not a man :  
An individual is a sacred mark,  
Not to be pierced in play, or in the dark ;



But public censure speaks a public foe,  
Unless a zeal for virtue guide the blow.

The priestly brotherhood, devout, sincere,  
From mean self-interest and ambition clear,  
Their hope in Heaven, fervility their scorn,  
Prompt to persuade, expostulate, and warn,  
Their wisdom pure, and given them from above,  
Their usefulness ensured by zeal and love,  
As meek as the man Moses, and withal  
As bold as in Agrippa's presence Paul,  
Should fly the world's contaminating touch,  
Holy and unpolluted :—are thine such ?  
Except a few with Eli's spirit blest,  
Hophni and Phineas may describe the rest.

Where shall a teacher look in days like these,  
For ears and hearts that he can hope to please ?  
Look to the poor—the simple and the plain  
Will hear perhaps thy salutary strain :  
Humility is gentle, apt to learn,  
Speak but the word, will listen and return.  
Alas, not so ! the poorest of the flock  
Are proud, and set their faces as a rock ;  
Denied that earthly opulence they choose,  
God's better gift they scoff at, and refuse.

The rich, the produce of a nobler stem,  
Are more intelligent at least, try them :  
Oh vain enquiry ! they without remorse  
Are altogether gone a devious course ;  
Where beckoning pleasure leads them, wildly stray ;  
Have burst the bands, and cast the yoke away.

Now borne upon the wings of truth sublime,  
Review thy dim original and prime.  
This island, spot of unreclaimed rude earth,  
The cradle that received thee at thy birth,  
Was rocked by many a rough Norwegian blast,  
And Danish howlings scared thee as they passed ;  
For thou wast born amid the din of arms,  
And sucked a breast that panted with alarms.  
While yet thou wast a groveling puling chit,  
Thy bones not fashioned and thy joints not knit,  
The Roman taught thy stubborn knee to bow,  
Though twice a Cæsar could not bend thee now :  
His victory was that of orient light,  
When the sun's shafts disperse the gloom of night.  
Thy language at this distant moment shows  
How much the country to the conqueror owes ;  
Expressive, energetic, and refined,  
It sparkles with the gems he left behind :

He brought thy land a blessing when he came,  
He found thee savage, and he left thee tame;  
Taught thee to clothe thy pinked and painted hide,  
And grace thy figure with a soldier's pride;  
He sowed the seeds of order where he went,  
Improved thee far beyond his own intent,  
And, while he ruled thee by the sword alone,  
Made thee at last a warrior like his own.  
Religion, if in heavenly truths attired,  
Needs only to be seen to be admired;  
But thine, as dark as witcheries of the night,  
Was formed to harden hearts and shock the sight;  
Thy Druids struck the well-hung harps they bore  
With fingers deeply dyed in human gore;  
And, while the victim slowly bled to death,  
Upon the rolling chords rung out his dying breath.

Who brought the lamp, that with awaking beams  
Dispelled thy gloom, and broke away thy dreams,  
Tradition, now decrepid and worn out,  
Babbler of ancient fables, leaves a doubt:  
But still light reached thee; and those gods of thine  
Woden and Thor, each tottering in his shrine,  
Fell broken and defaced at his own door,  
As Dagon in Philistia long before.



But Rome with forceries and magic wand  
Soon raised a cloud, that darkened every land;  
And thine was smothered in the stench and fog  
Of Tiber's marshes and the papal bog.

Then priests with bulls and briefs, and shaven  
crowns,

And griping fists, and unrelenting frowns,  
Legates and delegates with powers from hell,  
Though heavenly in pretension, fleeced thee well;  
And to this hour to keep it fresh in mind,  
Some twigs of that old scourge are left behind.\*

Thy soldiery, the pope's well managed pack,  
Were trained beneath his lash, and knew the smack,  
And, when he laid them on the scent of blood,  
Would hunt a Saracen through fire and flood.

Lavish of life to win an empty tomb,  
That proved a mint of wealth, a mine to Rome,  
They left their bones beneath unfriendly skies,  
His worthless absolution all the prize.

Thou wast the veriest slave in days of yore,  
That ever dragged a chain, or tugged an oar;  
Thy monarchs, arbitrary, fierce, unjust,  
Themselves the slaves of bigotry or lust,

\* Which may be found at Doctors' Commons.

Disdained thy counsels, only in distress  
Found thee a goodly sponge for power to press.  
Thy chiefs, the lords of many a petty fee,  
Provoked and harassed, in return plagued thee;  
Called thee away from peaceable employ,  
Domestic happiness and rural joy,  
To waste thy life in arms, or lay it down  
In causeless feuds and bickerings of their own.  
Thy parliaments adored on bended knees  
The sovereignty, they were convened to please;  
Whatever was asked, too timid to resist,  
Complied with, and were graciously dismissed;  
And if some Spartan soul a doubt expressed,  
And blushing at the tameness of the rest,  
Dared to suppose the subject had a choice,  
He was a traitor by the general voice.  
Oh slave! with powers thou didst not dare exert,  
Verse cannot stoop so low as thy desert;  
It shakes the sides of splenetic disdain,  
Thou self-entitled ruler of the main,  
To trace thee to the date when yon fair sea,  
That clips thy shores, had no such charms for thee;  
When other nations flew from coast to coast,  
And thou hadst neither fleet nor flag to boast.

Kneel now, and lay thy forehead in the dust;  
Blush if thou canst; not petrified, thou must;  
Act but an honest and a faithful part;  
Compare what then thou wast with what thou art;  
And God's disposing providence confessed,  
Obduracy itself must yield the rest.—  
Then thou art bound to serve him, and to prove,  
Hour after hour, thy gratitude and love.

Has he not hid thee, and thy favoured land,  
For ages safe beneath his sheltering hand,  
Given thee his blessing on the clearest proof,  
Bid nations leagued against thee stand aloof,  
And charged hostility and hate to roar,  
Where else they would, but not upon thy shore?  
His power secured thee, when presumptuous Spain  
Baptized her fleet invincible in vain;  
Her gloomy monarch, doubtful and resigned,  
To every pang, that racks an anxious mind,  
Asked of the waves, that broke upon his coast,  
What tidings? and the surge replied—All lost!  
And when the Stuart leaning on the Scot,  
Then too much feared, and now too much forgot,  
Pierced to the very centre of the realm,  
And hoped to seize his abdicated helm,



'Twas but to prove how quickly with a frown,  
He that had raised thee could have plucked thee  
down.

Peculiar is the grace by thee possessed,  
Thy foes implacable, thy land at rest;  
Thy thunders travel over earth and seas,  
And all at home is pleasure, wealth, and ease.  
'Tis thus, extending his tempestuous arm,  
Thy Maker fills the nations with alarm,  
While his own heaven surveys the troubled scene,  
And feels no change, unshaken and serene.  
Freedom, in other lands scarce known to shine,  
Pours out a flood of splendour upon thine;  
Thou hast as bright an interest in her rays,  
As ever Roman had in Rome's best days.  
True freedom is where no restraint is known,  
That scripture, justice, and good sense disown,  
Where only vice and injury are tied,  
And all from shore to shore is free beside.  
Such freedom is—and Windsor's hoary towers  
Stood trembling at the boldness of thy powers,  
That won a nymph on that immortal plain,  
Like her the fabled Phœbus wooed in vain:

He found the laurel only—happier you  
The unfading laurel and the virgin too\*!

Now think, if pleasure have a thought to spare;  
If God himself be not beneath her care;  
If business, constant as the wheels of time,  
Can pause an hour to read a serious rhyme;  
If the new mail thy merchants now receive,  
Or expectation of the next give leave;  
Oh think, if chargeable with deep arrears  
For such indulgence gilding all thy years,  
How much, though long neglected, shining yet  
The beams of heavenly truth have swelled the debt.  
When persecuting zeal made royal sport  
With tortured innocence in Mary's court,  
And Bonner, blithe as shepherd at a wake,  
Enjoyed the show, and danced about the stake;  
The sacred book, its value understood,  
Received the seal of martyrdom in blood.  
Those holy men, so full of truth and grace,  
Seem to reflection of a different race,  
Meek, modest, venerable, wise, sincere,  
In such a cause they could not dare to fear;

\*Alluding to the grant of Magna Charta, which was extorted from king John by the Barons at Runnymede near Windsor.

They could not purchase earth with such a prize,  
Or spare a life too short to reach the skies.  
From them to thee conveyed along the tide,  
Their streaming hearts poured freely when they died;  
Those truths, which neither use nor years impair,  
Invite thee, woo thee, to the bliss they share.  
What dotage will not vanity maintain?  
What web too weak to catch a modern brain?  
The moles and bats in full assembly find,  
On special search, the keen-eyed eagle blind.  
And did they dream, and art thou wiser now!  
Prove it—if better, I submit and bow.  
Wisdom and goodness are twin born, one heart  
Must hold both sisters, never seen apart.  
So then—as darkness overspread the deep,  
Ere nature rose from her eternal sleep,  
And this delightful earth, and that fair sky,  
Leaped out of nothing, called by the Most High;  
By such a change thy darkness is made light,  
Thy chaos order, and thy weakness might;  
And He, whose power mere nullity obeys,  
Who found thee nothing, formed thee for his praise.  
To praise him is to serve him, and fulfil,  
Doing and suffering, his unquestioned will;



'Tis to believe what men inspired of old,  
Faithful, and faithfully informed, unfold;  
Candid and just, with no false aim in view,  
To take for truth what cannot but be true;  
To learn in God's own school the Christian part,  
And bind the task assigned thee to thine heart:  
Happy the man there seeking and there found,  
Happy the nation where such men abound.

How shall a verse impress thee? by what name  
Shall I adjure thee not to court thy shame?  
By theirs, whose bright example unimpeached  
Directs thee to that eminence they reached,  
Heroes and worthies of days past, thy fires?  
Or his, who touched their hearts with hallowed fires?  
Their names, alas! in vain reproach an age,  
Whom all the vanities they scorned engage;  
And his, that seraphs tremble at, is hung  
Disgracefully on every trifler's tongue,  
Or serves the champion in forensic war  
To flourish and parade with at the bar.  
Pleasure herself perhaps suggests a plea,  
If interest move thee, to persuade even thee;  
By every charm, that smiles upon her face,  
By joys possessed, and joys still held in chase,

If dear society be worth a thought,  
And if the feast of freedom cloy thee not,  
Reflect that these, and all that seems thine own,  
Held by the tenure of his will alone,  
Like angels in the service of their Lord,  
Remain with thee, or leave thee at his word;  
That gratitude and temperance in our use  
Of what he gives, unsparing and profuse,  
Secure the favour, and enhance the joy,  
That thankless waste and wild abuse destroy.  
But above all reflect, how cheap so'er  
Those rights, that millions envy thee, appear,  
And, though resolved to risk them, and swim down  
The tide of pleasure, heedless of his frown,  
That blessings truly sacred, and when given  
Marked with the signature and stamp of heaven,  
The word of prophecy, those truths divine,  
Which make that heaven, if thou desire it, thine,  
(Awful alternative ! believed, beloved,  
Thy glory, and thy shame if unimproved)  
Are never long vouchsafed, if pushed aside  
With cold disgust or philosophic pride;  
And that, judicially withdrawn, disgrace,  
Error, and darkness, occupy their place.

A world is up in arms, and thou, a spot  
Not quickly found if negligently sought,  
Thy soul as ample as thy bounds are small,  
Endurest the brunt, and dar'est defy them all:  
And wilt thou join to this bold enterprize  
A bolder still, a contest with the skies?  
Remember, if he guard thee and secure,  
Whoever assails thee, thy success is sure;  
But if he leave thee, though the skill and power  
Of nations, sworn to spoil thee and devour,  
Were all collected in thy single arm,  
And thou couldst laugh away the fear of harm,  
That strength would fail, opposed against the push  
And feeble onset of a pigmy rush.

Say not (and if the thought of such defence  
Should spring within thy bosom, drive it thence)  
What nation amongst all my foes is free  
From crimes as base as any charged on me?  
Their measure filled, they too shall pay the debt  
Which God, though long forborn, will not forget.  
But know that wrath divine, when most severe,  
Makes justice still the guide of his career,  
And will not punish, in one mingled crowd,  
Them without light, and thee without a cloud.



Muse, hang this harp upon yon aged beech,  
Still murmuring with the solemn truths I teach;  
And while at intervals a cold blast sings  
Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the strings,  
My soul shall sigh in secret, and lament  
A nation scourged, yet tardy to repent.  
I know the warning song is sung in vain,  
That few will hear and fewer heed the strain ;  
But if a sweeter voice and one designed  
A blessing to my country and mankind,  
Reclaim the wandering thousands, and bring home  
A flock so scattered and so wont to roam,  
Then place it once again between my knees ;  
The sound of truth will then be sure to please :  
And truth alone, wherever my life be cast,  
In scenes of plenty or the pining waste,  
Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last. }

## H O P E.

—————*doceas iter, et sacra ostia pandas.*

VIRG. En. 6.

Ask what is human life—the sage replies,  
With disappointment lowering in his eyes,  
A painful passage over a restless flood,  
A vain pursuit of fugitive false good,  
A scene of fancied bliss and heart-felt care,  
Closing at last in darkness and despair.  
The poor, inured to drudgery and distress,  
Act without aim, think little, and feel less,  
And no where, but in feigned Arcadian scenes,  
Taste happiness, or know what pleasure means.  
Riches are passed away from hand to hand,  
As fortune, vice, or folly may command;

As in a dance the pair that take the lead  
Turn downward, and the lowest pair succeed,  
So shifting and so various is the plan,  
By which Heaven rules the mixt affairs of man:  
Vicissitude wheels round the motley crowd,  
The rich grow poor, the poor become purse-proud;  
Business is labour, and man's weakness such,  
Pleasure is labour too, and tires as much,  
The very sense of it foregoes its use,  
By repetition palled, by age obtuse.  
Youth lost in dissipation we deplore,  
Through life's sad remnant, what no ighs restore?  
Our years, a fruitless race without a prize,  
Too many, yet too few to make us wise.

Dangling his cane about, and taking snuff,  
Lothario cries, What philosophic stuff—  
Oh querulous and weak!—whose useless brain  
Once thought of nothing, and now thinks in vain;  
Whose eye reverted weeps over all the past,  
Whose prospect shows thee a disheartening waste;  
Would age in thee resign his wintry reign,  
And youth invigorate that frame again,  
Renewed desire would grace with other speech  
Joys always prized, when placed within our reach.



For lift thy palsied head, shake off the gloom,  
That overhangs the borders of thy tomb,  
See nature gay, as when she first began  
With smiles alluring her admirer man;  
She spreads the morning over eastern hills,  
Earth glitters with the drops the night distils;  
The sun obedient at her call appears,  
To fling his glories over the robe she wears;  
Banks clothed with flowers, groves filled with  
    sprightly sounds,  
The yellow tilth, green meads, rocks, rising  
    grounds,  
Streams edged with osiers, fattening every field  
Wherever they flow, now seen and now concealed;  
From the blue rim where skies and mountains meet,  
Down to the very turf beneath thy feet,  
Ten thousand charms, that only fools despise,  
Or pride can look at with indifferent eyes,  
All speak one language, all with one sweet voice  
Cry to her universal realm, Rejoice!  
Man feels the spur of passions and desires,  
And she gives largely more than he requires;  
Not that his hours devoted all to care,  
Hollow-eyed abstinence, and lean despair,

The wretch may pine, while to his smell, taste, sight,  
She holds a paradise of rich delight;  
But gently to rebuke his awkward fear,  
To prove that what she gives, she gives sincere,  
To banish hesitation, and proclaim  
His happiness, her dear, her only aim.  
'Tis grave philosophy's absurdest dream,  
That heaven's intentions are not what they seem,  
That only shadows are dispensed below,  
And earth has no reality but woe.

Thus things terrestrial wear a different hue,  
As youth or age persuades; and neither true:  
So Flora's wreath through coloured crystal seen,  
The rose or lily appears blue or green,  
But still the imputed tints are those alone  
The medium represents, and not their own.

To rise at noon, sit slipshod and undressed,  
To read the news, or fiddle, as seems best,  
Till half the world comes rattling at his door,  
To fill the dull vacuity till four;  
And, just when evening turns the blue vault gray,  
To spend two hours in dressing for the day;  
To make the sun a bauble without use,  
Save for the fruits his heavenly beams produce;

Quite to forget, or deem it worth no thought,  
Who bids him shine, or if he shine or not ;  
Through mere necessity to close his eyes  
Just when the larks and when the shepherds rise;  
Is such a life, so tediously the same,  
So void of all utility or aim,  
That poor JONQUIL, with almost every breath  
Sighs for his exit, vulgarly called death :  
For he, with all his follies, has a mind  
Not yet so blank, or fashionably blind,  
But now and then, perhaps, a feeble ray  
Of distant wisdom shoots across his way,  
By which he reads, that life without a plan,  
As useless as the moment it began,  
Serves merely as a foil for discontent  
To thrive in ; an incumbrance, ere half spent.  
Oh weariness beyond what asses feel,  
That tread the circuit of the cistern wheel ;  
A dull rotation, never at a stay,  
Yesterday's face twin image of to-day ;  
While conversation, an exhausted stock,  
Grows drowsy as the clicking of a clock.  
No need, he cries, of gravity stuffed out  
With academic dignity devout,



To read wise lectures, vanity the text:  
Proclaim the remedy, ye learned, next;  
For truth, self-evident, with pomp impressed,  
Is vanity surpassing all the rest.

That remedy, not hid in deeps profound,  
Yet seldom sought where only to be found,  
While passion turns aside from its due scope  
The inquirer's aim, that remedy is hope.  
Life is his gift, from whom whatever life needs,  
With every good and perfect gift proceeds;  
Bestowed on man, like all that we partake,  
Royally freely, for his bounty sake;  
Transient indeed, as is the fleeting hour,  
And yet the seed of an immortal flower;  
Designed in honour of his endless love,  
To fill with fragrance his abode above;  
No trifle, howsoever short it seem,  
And, howsoever shadowy, no dream;  
Its value, what no thought can ascertain,  
Nor all an angel's eloquence explain.  
Men deal with life as children with their play,  
Who first misuse, then cast their toys away;  
Live to no sober purpose, and contend  
That their Creator had no serious end.

When God and man stand opposite in view,  
Man's disappointment must of course ensue.  
The just Creator condescends to write,  
In beams of inextinguishable light,  
His names of wisdom, goodness, power and love,  
On all that blooms below, or shines above;  
To catch the wandering notice of mankind,  
And teach the world, if not perversely blind,  
His gracious attributes, and prove the share  
His offspring hold in his paternal care.  
If, led from earthly things to things divine,  
His creature thwart not his august design,  
Then praise is heard instead of reasoning pride,  
And captious cavil and complaint subside.  
Nature, employed in her allotted place,  
Is hand-maid to the purposes of grace;  
By good vouchsafed makes known superior good,  
And bliss not seen by blessings understood:  
That bliss, revealed in scripture, with a glow  
Bright as the covenant-ensuring bow,  
Fires all his feelings with a noble scorn  
Of sensual evil, and thus Hope is born.

Hope sets the stamp of vanity on all,  
That men have deemed substantial since the fall,

Yet has the wondrous virtue to educe  
From emptiness itself a real use;  
And while she takes, as at a father's hand,  
What health and sober appetite demand,  
From fading good derives, with chemic art,  
That lasting happiness, a thankful heart.  
Hope, with uplifted foot fet free from earth,  
Pants for the place of her ethereal birth,  
On steady wings sails through the immense abyss,  
Plucks amaranthine joys from bowers of bliss,  
And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,  
With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.  
Hope, as an anchor firm and sure, holds fast  
The Christian vessel, and defies the blast.  
Hope! nothing else can nourish and secure  
His new-born virtues, and preserve him pure.  
Hope! let the wretch, once conscious of the joy,  
Whom now despairing agonies destroy,  
Speak, for he can, and none so well as he,  
What treasures centre, what delights in thee.  
Had he the gems, the spices, and the land,  
That boasts the treasure, all at his command;  
The fragrant grove, the inestimable mine,  
Were light, when weighed against one smile of thine.



Though clasped and cradled in his nurse's arms,  
He shine with all a cherub's artless charms,  
Man is the genuine offspring of revolt,  
Stubborn and sturdy as a wild ass's colt;  
His passions, like the watery stores that sleep  
Beneath the smiling surface of the deep,  
Wait but the lashes of a wintry storm,  
To frown and roar, and shake his feeble form.  
From infancy through childhood's giddy maze,  
Froward at school, and fretful in his plays,  
The puny tyrant burns to subjugate  
The free republic of the whip-gig state.  
If one, his equal in athletic frame,  
Or, more provoking still, of nobler name,  
Dare step across his arbitrary views,  
An iliad, only not in verse, ensues :  
The little Greeks look trembling at the scales,  
Till the best tongue, or heaviest hand prevails.

Now see him launched into the world at large ;  
If priest, supinely droning over his charge,  
Their fleece his pillow, and his weekly drawl,  
Though short, too long, the price he pays for all,  
If lawyer, loud whatever cause he plead,  
But proudest of the worst, if that succeed.

Perhaps a grave physician, gathering fees,  
Punctually paid for lengthening out disease;  
No COTTON, whose humanity sheds rays,  
That make superior skill his second praise.  
If arms engage him, he devotes to sport  
His date of life, so likely to be short;  
A soldier may be any thing, if brave,  
So may a tradesman, if not quite a knave.  
Such stuff the world is made of; and mankind  
To passion, interest, pleasure, whim, resigned;  
Insist on, as if each were his own pope,  
Forgiveness and the privilege of hope.  
But conscience, in some awful silent hour,  
When captivating lusts have lost their power,  
Perhaps when sickness, or some fearful dream,  
Reminds him of religion, hated theme!  
Starts from the down, on which she lately slept,  
And tells of laws despised, at least not kept:  
Shows with a pointing finger but no noise  
A pale procession of past sinful joys,  
All witnesses of blessings foully scorned,  
And life abused, and not to be suborned.  
Mark these, she says; these summoned from afar,  
Begin their march to meet thee at the bar;

There find a Judge inexorably just,  
And perish there, as all presumption must.

Peace be to those (such peace as earth can give)  
Who live in pleasure, dead even while they live;  
Born capable indeed of heavenly truth;  
But down to latest age, from earliest youth,  
Their mind a wilderness through want of care,  
The plough of wisdom never entering there.

Peace (if insensibility may claim

A right to the meek honours of her name)

To men of pedigree, their noble race,

Emulous always of the nearest place

To any throne, except the throne of grace.

Let cottagers and unenlightened swains

Revere the laws they dream that heaven ordains;

Resort on Sundays to the house of prayer,

And ask, and fancy they find, blessings there.

Themselves, perhaps, when weary they retreat

To enjoy cool nature in a country seat,

To exchange the centre of a thousand trades,

For clumps, and lawns, and temples, and cascades,

May now and then their velvet cushions take,

And seem to pray for good example sake;



Judging, in charity no doubt, the town  
Pious enough, and having need of none.  
Kind souls! to teach their tenantry to prize  
What they themselves, without remorse, despise:  
Nor hope have they, nor fear, of aught to come,  
As well for them had prophecy been dumb;  
They could have held the conduct they pursue,  
Had Paul of Tarsus lived and died a Jew;  
And truth, proposed to reasoners wise as they,  
Is a pearl cast—completely cast away.

They die.—Death lends them, pleased and as in  
sport,

All the grim honours of his ghastly court.  
Far other paintings grace the chamber now,  
Where late we saw the mimic landscape glow:  
The busy heralds hang the fable scene  
With mournful 'scutcheons, and dim lamps  
between;  
Proclaim their titles to the crowd around,  
But they that wore them move not at the sound;  
The coronet, placed idly at their head,  
Adds nothing now to the degraded dead,  
And even the star, that glitters on the bier,  
Can only say—Nobility lies here.

Peace to all such—'twere pity to offend  
By useless censure, whom we cannot mend;  
Life without hope can close but in despair,  
'Twas there we found them, and must leave them  
there.

As, when two pilgrims in a forest stray,  
Both may be lost, yet each in his own way;  
So fares it with the multitudes beguiled  
In vain opinion's waste and dangerous wild;  
Ten thousand rove the brakes and thorns among,  
Some eastward, and some westward, and all wrong.  
But here, alas! the fatal difference lies,  
Each man's belief is right in his own eyes;  
And he that blames what they have blindly chose,  
Incurs resentment for the love he shows.

Say botanist, within whose province fall  
The cedar and the hyssop on the wall,  
Of all that deck the lanes, the fields, the bowers,  
What parts the kindred tribes of weeds and  
flowers?

Sweet scent, or lovely form, or both combined,  
Distinguish every cultivated kind;  
The want of both denotes a meaner breed,  
And Chloe from her garland picks the weed.

Thus hopes of every sort, whatever sect  
Esteem them, sow them, rear them, and protect,  
If wild in nature, and not duly found,  
Gethsemane! in thy dear hallowed ground,  
That cannot bear the blaze of scripture light,  
Nor cheer the spirit, nor refresh the fight,  
Nor animate the soul to Christian deeds,  
(Oh cast them from thee!) are weeds, arrant weeds.

Ethelred's house, the centre of six ways,  
Diverging each from each, like equal rays,  
Himself as bountiful as April rains,  
Lord paramount of the surrounding plains,  
Would give relief of bed and board to none,  
But guests that fought it in the appointed ONE.  
And they might enter at his open door,  
Even till his spacious hall would hold no more.  
He sent a servant forth by every road,  
To sound his horn and publish it abroad,  
That all might mark—knight, menial, high and  
low,

An ordinance it concerned them much to know,  
If after all some headstrong hardy lout  
Would disobey, though sure to be shut out,



Could he with reason murmur at his case,  
Himself sole author of his own disgrace?  
No! the decree was just and without flaw;  
And he that made, had right to make, the law;  
His sovereign power and pleasure unrestrained,  
The wrong was his, who wrongfully complained.

Yet half mankind maintain a churlish strife  
With him the Donor of eternal life,  
Because the deed, by which his love confirms  
The largests he bestows, prescribes the terms.  
Compliance with his will your lot ensures,  
Accept it only, and the boon is your's.  
And sure it is as kind to smile and give,  
As with a frown to say, Do this, and live.  
Love is not pedlar's trumpery bought and sold:  
He *will* give freely, or he *will* withhold;  
His soul abhors a mercenary thought,  
And him as deeply who abhors it not;  
He stipulates indeed, but merely this,  
That man will freely take an unbought bliss,  
Will trust him for a faithful generous part,  
Nor set a price upon a willing heart.  
Of all the ways that seem to promise fair,  
To place you where his saints his presence share,

This only can; for this plain cause, expressed  
 In terms as plain, himself has shut the rest.  
 But oh the strife, the bickering, and debate,  
 The tidings of unpurchased heaven create!  
 The fluted fan, the bridle and the tofs,  
 All speakers, yet all language at a loss.  
 From stuccoed walls smart arguments rebound;  
 And beaux, adepts in every thing profound,  
 Die of disdain, or whistle off the sound. }  
 Such is the clamour of rooks, daws, and kites,  
 The explosion of the levelled tube excites,  
 Where mouldering abbey-walls overhang the  
     glade,  
 And oaks coeval spread a mournful shade,  
 The screaming nations, hovering in mid air,  
 Loudly resent the stranger's freedom there,  
 And seem to warn him never to repeat  
 His bold intrusion on their dark retreat.

Adieu, Vinosa cries, ere yet he sips  
 The purple bumper trembling at his lips,  
 Adieu to all morality! if grace  
 Make works a vain ingredient in the case.  
 The Christian hope is—Waiter, draw the cork—  
 If I mistake not—Blockhead! with a fork!—

Without good works, whatever some may boast,  
Mere folly and delusion—Sir, your toast.  
My firm persuasion is, at least sometimes,  
That heaven will weigh man's virtues and his crimes  
With nice attention, in a righteous scale,  
And save or damn as these or those prevail.  
I plant my foot upon this ground of trust,  
And silence every fear with—God is just.  
But if perchance on some dull drizzling day  
A thought intrude that says, or seems to say,  
If thus the important cause is to be tried,  
Suppose the beam should dip on the wrong side;  
I soon recover from these needless frights,  
And God is merciful—sets all to rights.  
Thus, between justice, as my prime support,  
And mercy, fled to as the last resort,  
I glide and steal along with heaven in view,  
And, pardon me, the bottle stands with you.

I never will believe, the colonel cries,  
The sanguinary schemes that some devise,  
Who make the good Creator on their plan  
A being of less equity than man.  
If appetite, or what divines call lust,  
Which men comply with, e'en because they must,



Be punished with perdition, who is pure?  
Then their's, no doubt, as well as mine, is sure.  
If sentence of eternal pain belong  
To every sudden slip and transient wrong,  
Then heaven enjoins the fallible and frail  
An hopeless task, and damns them if they fail.  
My creed (whatever some creed-makers mean  
By Athanasian nonsense, or Nicene)  
My creed is, he is safe that does his best,  
And death's a doom sufficient for the rest.

Right, says an ensign; and for aught I see,  
Your faith and mine substantially agree;  
The best of every man's performance here  
Is to discharge the duties of his sphere.  
A lawyer's dealings should be just and fair,  
Honesty shines with great advantage there.  
Fasting and prayer fit well upon a priest,  
A decent caution and reserve at least.  
A soldier's best is courage in the field,  
With nothing here that wants to be concealed.  
Manly deportment, gallant, easy, gay;  
An hand as liberal as the light of day.  
The soldier thus endowed, who never shrinks,  
Nor closets up his thoughts, whatever he thinks,

Who scorns to do an injury by stealth,  
Must go to heaven—and I must drink his health.  
Sir Smug, he cries, (for lowest at the board,  
Just made fifth chaplain of his patron lord,  
His shoulders witnessing by many a shrug  
How much his feelings suffered, fat Sir Smug)  
Your office is to winnow false from true;  
Come, prophet, drink, and tell us, What think  
you?

Sighing and smiling as he takes his glass,  
Which they that woo preferment rarely pass,  
Fallible man, the church-bred youth replies,  
Is still found fallible, however wise;  
And differing judgments serve but to declare  
That truth lies somewhere, if we knew but where.  
Of all it ever was my lot to read,  
Of critics now alive, or long since dead,  
The book of all the world that charmed me most  
Was, well-a-day, the title page was lost;  
The writer well remarks, an heart that knows  
To take with gratitude what heaven bestows,  
With prudence always ready at our call,  
To guide our use of it, is all in all.

Doubtless it is.—To which, of my own store,  
I superadd a few essentials more;  
But these, excuse the liberty I take,  
I wave just now, for conversation sake.—  
Spoke like an oracle, they all exclaim,  
And add Right Reverend to Smug's honoured name.

And yet our lot is given us in a land,  
Where busy arts are never at a stand;  
Where science points her telescopic eye,  
Familiar with the wonders of the sky;  
Where bold inquiry, diving out of sight,  
Brings many a precious pearl of truth to light;  
Where nought eludes the persevering quest,  
That fashion, taste, or luxury, suggest.

But above all in her own light arrayed,  
See mercy's grand apocalypse displayed!  
The sacred book no longer suffers wrong,  
Bound in the fetters of an unknown tongue;  
But speaks with plainness, art could never mend,  
What simplest minds can soonest comprehend.  
God gives the word, the preachers throng around,  
Live from his lips, and spread the glorious sound:  
That sound bespeaks salvation on her way,  
The trumpet of a life-restoring day;



'Tis heard where England's eastern glory shines,  
And in the gulphs of her Cornubian mines.  
And still it spreads. See Germany send forth  
Her sons\* to pour it on the farthest north :  
Fired with a zeal peculiar, *they* defy  
The rage and rigour of a polar sky,  
And plant successfully sweet Sharon's rose  
On icy plains, and in eternal snows.

Oh blest within the enclosure of your rocks,  
Nor herds have ye to boast, nor bleating flocks;  
No fertilizing streams your fields divide,  
That show reversed the villas on their side;  
No groves have ye; no cheerful sound of bird,  
Or voice of turtle, in your land is heard;  
Nor grateful eglantine regales the smell  
Of those, that walk at evening where ye dwell:  
But winter, armed with terrors here unknown,  
Sits absolute on his unshaken throne;  
Piles up his stores amidst the frozen waste,  
And bids the mountains he has built stand fast;  
Beckons the legions of his storms away  
From happier scenes, to make your land a prey;

\* The Moravian missionaries in Greenland. Vide Krantz.

Proclaims the foil a conquest he has won,  
And scorns to share it with the distant sun.  
—Yet truth is your's, remote, unenvied isle!  
And peace, the genuine offspring of her smile;  
The pride of lettered ignorance, that binds  
In chains of error our accomplished minds,  
That decks, with all the splendour of the true,  
A false religion, is unknown to you.  
Nature indeed vouchsafes for our delight  
The sweet vicissitudes of day and night;  
Soft airs and genial moisture feed and cheer  
Field, fruit, and flower, and every creature here;  
But brighter beams, than his who fires the skies,  
Have risen at length on your admiring eyes,  
That shoot into your darkest caves the day,  
From which our nicer optics turn away.

Here see the encouragement grace gives to vice,  
The dire effect of mercy without price!  
What were they? what some fools are made by art,  
They were by nature, atheists, head and heart.  
The gross idolatry blind heathens teach  
Was too refined for them, beyond their reach.  
Not even the glorious sun, though men revere  
The monarch most, that seldom will appear,

And though his beams, that quicken where they  
shine,

May claim some right to be esteemed divine,  
Not e'en the sun, desirable as rare,  
Could bend one knee, engage one votary there;  
They were, what base credulity believes  
True Christians are, dissemblers, drunkards, thieves.  
The full-gorged savage, at his nauseous feast  
Spent half the darkness, and snored out the rest,  
Was one, whom justice on an equal plan  
Denouncing death upon the sins of man,  
Might almost have indulged with an escape,  
Chargeable only with an human shape.

What are they now?—Morality may spare  
Her ~~grave~~ concern, her kind suspicions there:  
The wretch, who once sang wildly, danced and  
laughed,

And sucked in dizzy madness with his draught,  
Has wept a silent flood, reversed his ways,  
Is sober, meek, benevolent, and prays,  
Feeds sparingly, communicates his store,  
Abhors the craft he boasted of before,  
And he that stole has learned to steal no more. }

Well spake the prophet, Let the desert sing,  
Where sprang the thorn, the spiry fir shall spring,



And where unfightly and rank thistles grew,  
Shall grow the myrtle and luxuriant yew.

Go now, and with important tone demand  
On what foundation virtue is to stand,  
If self-exalting claims be turned adrift,  
And grace be grace indeed, and life a gift:  
The poor reclaimed inhabitant, his eyes  
Glistening at once with pity and surprise,  
Amazed that shadows should obscure the sight  
Of one, whose birth was in a land of light,  
Shall answer, Hope, sweet hope, has set me free,  
And made all pleasures else mere dross to me.

These, amidst scenes as waste as if denied  
The common care that waits on all beside,  
Wild as if nature there, void of all good,  
Played only gambols in a frantic mood,  
(Yet charge not heavenly skill with having planned  
A play-thing world, unworthy of his hand;)  
Can see his love, though secret evil lurks  
In all we touch, stamped plainly on his works;  
Deem life a blessing with its numerous woes,  
Nor spurn away a gift a God bestows.  
Hard task indeed over arctic seas to roam!  
Is hope exotic? grows it not at home?

Yes, but an object, bright as orient morn,  
May press the eye too closely to be borne;  
A distant virtue we can all confess,  
It hurts our pride, and moves our envy, less.

Leuconomus (beneath well-sounding Greek  
I slur a name a poet must not speak)  
Stood pilloried on infamy's high stage,  
And bore the pelting score of half an age;  
The very butt of slander, and the blot  
For every dart that malice ever shot.

The man that mentioned *him* at once dismissed  
All mercy from his lips, and sneered and hissed;  
His crimes were such as Sodom never knew,  
And perjury stood up to swear all true;  
His aim was mischief, and his zeal pretence,  
His speech rebellion against common sense;  
A knave when tried on honesty's plain rule,  
And when by that of reason a mere fool;  
The world's best comfort was, his doom was passed;  
Die when he might, he must be damned at last.

Now truth perform thine office; waft aside  
The curtain drawn by prejudice and pride,  
Reveal (the man is dead) to wondering eyes  
This more than monster in his proper guise.

He loved the world that hated him: the tear  
That dropped upon his Bible was sincere:  
Affailed by scandal and the tongue of strife,  
His only answer was, a blameless life;  
And he that forged, and he that threw the dart,  
Had each a brother's interest in his heart.  
Paul's love of Christ, and steadiness unbribed,  
Were copied close in him, and well transcribed.  
He followed Paul; his zeal a kindred flame,  
His apostolic charity the same.  
Like him, crossed cheerfully tempestuous seas,  
Forfaking country, kindred, friends, and ease;  
Like him he laboured, and like him content  
To bear it, suffered shame where'er he went.  
Blush calumny! and write upon his tomb,  
If honest eulogy can spare thee room,  
Thy deep repentance of thy thousand lies,  
Which aimed at him, have pierced the offended  
    skies;  
And say, Blot out my sin, confessed, deplored,  
Against thine image in thy saint, oh Lord!  
No blinder bigot, I maintain it still,  
Than he who must have pleasure, come what will:  
He laughs, whatever weapon truth may draw,  
And deems her sharp artillery mere straw.



Scripture indeed is plain ; but God and he  
 On scripture-ground are sure to disagree ;  
 Some wiser rule must teach him how to live,  
 Than this his Maker has seen fit to give ;  
 Supple and flexible as Indian cane,  
 To take the bend his appetites ordain ;  
 Contrived to suit frail nature's crazy case,  
 And reconcile his lusts with saving grace.  
 By this, with nice precision of design,  
 He draws upon life's map a zig-zag line,  
 That shows how far 'tis safe to follow sin,  
 And where his danger and God's wrath begin.  
 By this he forms, as pleased he sports along,  
 His well poised estimate of right and wrong ;  
 And finds the modish manners of the day,  
 Though loose, as harmless as an infant's play.

Build by whatever plan caprice decrees,  
 With what materials, on what ground you please ;  
 Your hope shall stand unblamed, perhaps admired,  
 If not that hope the scripture has required,  
 The strange conceits, vain projects, and wild dreams,  
 With which hypocrisy for ever teems,  
 (Though other follies strike the public eye,  
 And raise a laugh) pass unmolested by ;

But if, unblameable in word or thought,  
 A *man* arise, a man whom God has taught,  
 With all Elijah's dignity of tone,  
 And all the love of the beloved John,  
 To storm the citadels they build in air,  
 And smite the untempered wall; 'tis death to spare.  
 To sweep away all refuges of lies,  
 And place, instead of quirks themselves devise,  
 LAMA SABACTHANI before their eyes; }  
 To prove that without Christ all gain is loss,  
 All hope despair, that stands not on his cross;  
 Except the few his God may have impressed,  
 A tenfold frenzy seizes all the rest.

Throughout mankind, the Christian kind at least,  
 There dwells a consciousness in every breast,  
 That folly ends where genuine hope begins,  
 And he that finds his heaven must lose his sins.  
 Nature opposes with her utmost force,  
 This riving stroke, this ultimate divorce;  
 And while religion seems to be her view;  
 Hates with a deep sincerity *the true*:  
 For this, of all that ever influenced man,  
 Since Abel worshipped, or the world began,  
 This only spares no lust, admits no plea,  
 But makes him, if at all, completely free;

Sounds forth the signal, as she mounts her car,  
Of an eternal, universal war;  
Rejects all treaty, penetrates all wiles,  
Scorns with the same indifference frowns and smiles;  
Drives through the realms of sin, where riot reels,  
And grinds his crown beneath her burning wheels!  
Hence all that is in man, pride, passion, art,  
Powers of the mind, and feelings of the heart,  
Insensible of truth's almighty charms,  
Starts at her first approach, and sounds to arms!  
While bigotry, with well dissembled fears,  
His eyes shut fast, his fingers in his ears,  
Mighty to parry and puff by God's word  
With senseless noise, his argument the sword,  
Pretends a zeal for godliness and grace,  
And spits abhorrence in the Christian's face.

Parent of hope, immortal truth! make known  
Thy deathless wreaths, and triumphs all thine own:  
The silent progress of thy power is such,  
Thy means so feeble, and despised so much,  
That few believe the wonders thou hast wrought,  
And none can teach them but whom thou hast  
taught.

Oh see me sworn to serve thee, and command  
A painter's skill into a poet's hand,



That while I trembling trace a work divine,  
Fancy may stand aloof from the design,  
And light, and shade, and every stroke be thine. }

If ever thou hast felt another's pain,  
If ever when he sigh'd hast sigh'd again,  
If ever on thy eye-lid stood the tear,  
That pity had engendered, drop one here.

This man was happy—had the world's good word,  
And with it every joy it can afford;

Friendship and love seemed tenderly at strife,  
Which most should sweeten his untroubled life;

Politely learned, and of a gentle race,

Good-breeding and good sense gave all a grace,

And whether at the toilette of the fair

He laughed and trifled, made him welcome there,

Or if in masculine debate he shared,

Ensured him mute attention and regard.

Alas how changed ! Expressive of his mind,

His eyes are sunk, arms folded, head reclined ;

Those awful syllables, hell, death, and sin,

Though whispered, plainly tell what works within ;

That conscience there performs her proper part,

And writes a doomsday sentence on his heart ;

Forfaking, and forsaken of all friends,

He now perceives where earthly pleasure ends ;

Hard task! for one who lately knew no care,  
And harder still as learnt beneath despair;  
His hours no longer pass unmarked away,  
A dark importance saddens every day;  
He hears the notice of the clock, perplexed,  
And cries, perhaps eternity strikes next;  
Sweet music is no longer music here,  
And laughter sounds like madness in his ear:  
His grief the world of all her power disarms,  
Wine has no taste, and beauty has no charms:  
God's holy word, once trivial in his view,  
Now by the voice of his experience true,  
Seems, as it is, the fountain whence alone  
Must spring that hope he pants to make his own.

Now let the bright reverse be known abroad;  
Say man's a worm, and power belongs to God.

As when a felon, whom his country's laws  
Have justly doomed for some atrocious cause,  
Expects in darkness and heart-chilling fears,  
The shameful close of all his mispent years;  
If chance, on heavy pinions slowly borne,  
A tempest usher in the dreaded morn,  
Upon his dungeon walls the lightning play,  
The thunder seems to summon him away,

The warder at the door his key applies,  
Shoots back the bolt, and all his courage dies :  
If then, just then, all thoughts of mercy lost,  
When hope, long lingering, at last yields the ghost,  
The sound of pardon pierce his startled ear,  
He drops at once his fetters and his fear ;  
A transport glows in all he looks and speaks,  
And the first thankful tears bedew his cheeks.  
Joy, far superior joy, that much outweighs  
The comfort of a few poor added days,  
Invades, possesses, and o'erwhelms the soul  
Of him, whom hope has with a touch made whole.  
'Tis heaven, all heaven descending on the wings  
Of the glad legions of the king of kings ;  
'Tis more—'tis God diffused through every part,  
'Tis God himself triumphant in his heart.  
Oh welcome now the sun's once hated light,  
His noon-day beams were never half so bright.  
Not kindred minds alone are called to employ  
Their hours, their days, in listening to his joy ;  
Unconscious nature, all that he surveys,  
Rocks, groves, and streams, must join him in his praise.

These are thy glorious works, eternal truth,  
The scoff of withered age and beardless youth ;



These move the censure and illiberal grin  
Of fools, that hate thee and delight in sin :  
But these shall last when night has quenched the  
pole,

And heaven is all departed as a scroll.  
And when, as justice has long since decreed,  
This earth shall blaze, and a new world succeed,  
Then these thy glorious works, and they who share  
That hope, which can alone exclude despair,  
Shall live exempt from weakness and decay,  
The brightest wonders of an endless day.

Happy the bard, (if that fair name belong  
To him, that blends no fable with his song)  
Whose lines uniting, by an honest art,  
The faithful monitor's and poet's part,  
Seek to delight, that they may mend mankind,  
And while they captivate, inform the mind :  
Still happier, if he till a thankful soil,  
And fruit reward his honourable toil :  
But happier far, who comfort those, that wait  
To hear plain truth at Judah's hallowed gate :  
Their language simple, as their manners meek,  
No shining ornaments have they to seek ;  
Nor labour they, nor time nor talents waste,  
In sorting flowers to suit a fickle taste ;

But while they speak the wisdom of the skies,  
Which art can only darken and disguise,  
The abundant harvest, recompense divine,  
Repays their work—the gleanings only mine.

## CHARITY.

*Qua nihil majus meliusve terris  
Fata donavere, boniq; divi,  
Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum  
Tempora priscum.*

HOR. Lib. IV. Ode 2.

FAIREST and foremost of the train, that wait  
On man's most dignified and happiest state,  
Whether we name thee Charity or love,  
Chief grace below, and all in all above,  
Prosper (I press thee with a powerful plea)  
A task I venture on, impelled by thee:  
Oh never seen but in thy blest effects,  
Or felt but in the soul that heaven selects;



Who seeks to praise thee, and to make thee known  
To other hearts, must have thee in his own.  
Come, prompt me with benevolent desires,  
Teach me to kindle at thy gentle fires,  
And though disgraced and slighted, to redeem  
A poet's name, by making thee the theme.

God, working ever on a social plan,  
By various ties attaches man to man:  
He made at first, though free and unconfined,  
One man the common father of the kind;  
That every tribe, though placed as he sees best,  
Where seas or deserts part them from the rest,  
Differing in language, manners, or in face,  
Might feel themselves allied to all the race.  
When Cook—lamented, and with tears as just  
As ever mingled with heroic dust,  
Steered Britain's oak into a world unknown,  
And in his country's glory fought his own,  
Wherever he found man, to nature true,  
The rights of man were sacred in his view;  
He soothed with gifts, and greeted with a smile,  
The simple native of the new-found isle;  
He spurned the wretch, that slighted or withstood  
The tender argument of kindred blood,

Nor would endure that any should controul  
His free-born brethren of the southern pole.

But though some nobler minds a law respect,  
That none shall with impunity neglect,  
In baser souls unnumbered evils meet,  
To thwart its influence, and its end defeat.  
While Cook is loved for savage lives he saved,  
See Cortez odious for a world enslaved!  
Where wast thou then, sweet Charity? where then,  
Thou tutelary friend of helpless men?  
Wast thou in monkish cells and nunneries found,  
Or building hospitals on English ground?  
No.—Mammon makes the world his legatee  
Through fear, not love; and heaven abhors the fee.  
Wherever found, (and all men need thy care)  
Nor age nor infancy could find thee there.  
The hand, that slew till it could slay no more,  
Was glued to the sword-hilt with Indian gore.  
Their prince, as justly seated on his throne  
As vain imperial Philip on his own,  
Tricked out of all his royalty by art,  
That stripped him bare, and broke his honest heart,  
Died by the sentence of a shaven priest,  
For scorning what they taught him to detest.

How dark the veil, that intercepts the blaze  
Of heaven's mysterious purposes and ways;  
God stood not, though he seemed to stand, aloof;  
And at this hour the conqueror feels the proof:  
The wreath he won drew down an instant curse,  
The fretting plague is in the public purse,  
The cankered spoil corrodes the pining state,  
Starved by that indolence their mines create.

Oh could their ancient Incas rise again,  
How would they take up Israel's taunting strain!  
Art thou too fallen Iberia? Do we see  
The robber and the murderer weak as we?  
Thou, that hast wasted earth, and dared despise  
Alike the wrath and mercy of the skies,  
Thy pomp is in the grave, thy glory laid  
Low in the pits thine avarice has made.  
We come with joy from our eternal rest,  
To see the oppressor in his turn oppressed.  
Art thou the god, the thunder of whose hand  
Rolled over all our desolated land,  
Shook principalities and kingdoms down,  
And made the mountains tremble at his frown?  
The sword shall light upon thy boasted powers,  
And waste them, as thy sword has wasted ours.



'Tis thus Omnipotence his law fulfils,  
And vengeance executes what justice wills.

Again—the band of commerce was designed  
To associate all the branches of mankind;  
And if a boundless plenty be the robe,  
Trade is the golden girdle of the globe.  
Wise to promote whatever end he means,  
God opens fruitful nature's various scenes:  
Each climate needs what other climes produce,  
And offers something to the general use;  
No land but listens to the common call,  
And in return receives supply from all.  
This genial intercourse, and mutual aid,  
Cheers what were else an universal shade,  
Calls nature from her ivy mantled den,  
And softens human rock-work into men.  
Ingenious Art, with her expressive face,  
Steps forth to fashion and refine the race;  
Not only fills necessity's demand,  
But overcharges her capacious hand:  
Capricious taste itself can crave no more,  
Than she supplies from her abounding store:  
She strikes out all that luxury can ask,  
And gains new vigour at her endless task.

Her's is the spacious arch, the shapely spire,  
The painter's pencil, and the poet's lyre ;  
From her the canvass borrows light and shade,  
And verse, more lasting, hues that never fade.  
She guides the finger over the dancing keys,  
Gives difficulty all the grace of ease,  
And pours a torrent of sweet notes around,  
Fast as the thirsting ear can drink the sound.

These are the gifts of art, and art thrives most  
Where commerce has enriched the busy coast ;  
He catches all improvements in his flight,  
Spreads foreign wonders in his country's sight,  
Imports what others have invented well,  
And stirs his own to match them, or excel.  
'Tis thus reciprocating, each with each,  
Alternately the nations learn and teach ;  
While providence enjoins to every soul  
An union with the vast terraqueous whole.

Heaven-speed the canvass, gallantly unfurled  
To furnish and accommodate a world,  
To give the pole the produce of the sun,  
And knit the unsocial climates into one.—  
Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave  
Impel the fleet whose errand is to save,

To succour wasted regions, and replace  
The smile of opulence in sorrow's face.—  
Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,  
Impede the bark, that plows the deep serene,  
Charged with a freight transcending in its worth  
The gems of India, nature's rarest birth,  
That flies, like Gabriel on his Lord's commands,  
An herald of God's love to pagan lands.  
But ah! what wish can prosper, or what prayer,  
For merchants rich in cargoes of despair,  
Who drive a loathsome traffic, gage, and span,  
And buy the muscles and the bones of man?  
The tender ties of father, husband, friend,  
All bonds of nature in that moment end;  
And each endures, while yet he draws his breath,  
A stroke as fatal as the scythe of death.  
The sable warrior, frantic with regret  
Of her he loves, and never can forget,  
Loses in tears the far receding shore,  
But not the thought that they must meet no more;  
Deprived of her and freedom at a blow,  
What has he left that he can yet forego?  
Yes, to deep sadness sullenly resigned,  
He feels his body's bondage in his mind;



Puts off his generous nature; and, to suit  
His manners with his fate, puts on the brute.

Oh most degrading of all ills, that wait  
On man, a mourner in his best estate!  
All other sorrows virtue may endure,  
And find submission more than half a cure;  
Grief is itself a medicine, and bestowed  
To improve the fortitude that bears the load,  
To teach the wanderer, as his woes increase,  
The path of wisdom, all whose paths are peace;  
But slavery!—virtue dreads it as her grave:  
Patience itself is meanness in a slave;  
Or if the will and sovereignty of God  
Bid suffer it awhile, and kiss the rod,  
Wait for the dawning of a brighter day,  
And snap the chain the moment when you may.  
Nature imprints upon whatever we see,  
That has a heart and life in it, Be free;  
The beasts are chartered—neither age nor force  
Can quell the love of freedom in a horse:  
He breaks the cord, that held him at the rack;  
And, conscious of an unincumbered back,  
Snuffs up the morning air, forgets the rein,  
Loose fly forelock and his ample mane;

Responsive to the distant neigh he neighs ;  
Nor stops, till overleaping all delays,  
He finds the pasture where his fellows graze. }

Canst thou, and honoured with a Christian name,  
Buy what is woman-born, and feel no shame ;  
Trade in the blood of innocence, and plead  
Expedience as a warrant for the deed ?

So may the wolf, whom famine has made bold  
To quit the forest and invade the fold :

So may the ruffian, who with ghostly glide,  
Dagger in hand, steals close to your bedside ;  
Not he, but his emergence forced the door,  
He found it inconvenient to be poor.

Has God then given its sweetness to the cane,  
Unless his laws be trampled on—in vain ?

Built a brave world, which cannot yet subsist,  
Unless his right to rule it be dismissed ?

Impudent blasphemy ! So folly pleads,

And, avarice being judge, with ease succeeds.

But grant the plea, and let it stand for just,  
That man make man his prey, because he *must* ;

Still there is room for pity to abate,

And sooth the sorrows of so sad a state.

A Briton knows, or if he knows it not,  
The scripture placed within his reach, he ought,  
That souls have no discriminating hue,  
Alike important in their Maker's view;  
That none are free from blemish since the fall,  
And love divine has paid one price for all.  
The wretch, that works and weeps without relief,  
Has one that notices his silent grief.  
He, from whose hands alone all power proceeds,  
Ranks its abuse among the foulest deeds,  
Considers *all* injustice with a frown;  
But *marks* the man that treads his fellow down.  
Begone, the whip and bell in that hard hand  
Are hateful ensigns of usurped command.  
Not Mexico could purchase kings a claim  
To scourge him, weariness his only blame.  
Remember, heaven has an avenging rod,  
To smite the poor is treason against God.

    Trouble is grudgingly and hardly brooked,  
While life's sublimest joys are overlooked:  
We wander over a sun-burnt thirsty soil,  
Murmuring and weary of our daily toil,  
Forget to enjoy the palm-tree's offered shade,  
Or taste the fountain in the neighbouring glade:



Else who would lose, that had the power to improve,  
The occasion of transmuting fear to love?  
Oh 'tis a godlike privilege to save,  
And he that scorns it is himself a slave.  
Inform his mind; one flash of heavenly day  
Would heal his heart, and melt his chains away.  
“Beauty for ashes” is a gift indeed,  
And slaves, by truth enlarged, are doubly freed.  
Then would he say, submissive at thy feet,  
While gratitude and love made service sweet,  
My dear deliverer out of hopeless night,  
Whose bounty bought me but to give me light,  
I was a bondman on my native plain,  
Sin forged, and ignorance made fast, the chain;  
Thy lips have shed instruction as the dew,  
Taught me what path to shun and what pursue;  
Farewell my former joys! I sigh no more  
For Africa's once loved, benighted shore;  
Serving a benefactor I am free,  
At my best home if not exiled from thee.

Some men make gain a fountain, whence proceeds  
A stream of liberal and heroic deeds;  
The swell of pity, not to be confined  
Within the scanty limits of the mind,

Disdains the bank, and throws the golden sands,  
A rich deposit, on the bordering lands:  
These have an ear for his paternal call,  
Who makes some rich for the supply of all;  
God's gift with pleasure in his praise employ,  
And THORNTON is familiar with the joy.

Oh could I worship aught beneath the skies,  
That earth hath seen, or fancy can devise,  
Thine altar, sacred liberty, should stand,  
Built by no mercenary vulgar hand,  
With fragrant turf, and flowers as wild and fair  
As ever dressed a bank, or scented summer air.  
Duly, as ever on the mountain's height  
The peep of morning shed a dawning light,  
Again, when evening in her sober vest  
Drew the gray curtain of the fading west,  
My soul should yield thee willing thanks and praise,  
For the chief blessings of my fairest days:  
But that were sacrilege—praise is not thine,  
But his who gave thee, and preserves thee mine:  
Else I would say, and as I spake bid fly  
A captive bird into the boundless sky,  
This triple realm adores thee—thou art come  
From Sparta hither, and art here at home.

We feel thy force still active, at this hour  
Enjoy immunity from priestly power,  
While conscience, happier than in ancient years,  
Owns no superior but the God she fears.  
Propitious spirit! yet expunge a wrong  
Thy rights have suffered, and our land, too long.  
Teach mercy to ten thousand hearts, that share  
The fears and hopes of a commercial care.  
Prisons expect the wicked, and were built  
To bind the lawless, and to punish guilt;  
But shipwreck, earthquake, battle, fire, and flood,  
Are mighty mischiefs, not to be withstood;  
And honest merit stands on slippery ground,  
Where covert guile and artifice abound.  
Let just restraint, for public peace designed,  
Chain up the wolves and tigers of mankind;  
The foe of virtue has no claim to thee,  
But let insolvent innocence go free.

Patron of else the most despised of men,  
Accept the tribute of a stranger's pen;  
Verse, like the laurel, its immortal meed,  
Should be the guerdon of a noble deed;  
I may alarm thee, but I fear the shame  
(Charity chosen as my theme and aim)  
I must incur, forgetting HOWARD's name.

}



Blest with all wealth can give thee, to resign  
Joys doubly sweet to feelings quick as thine,  
To quit the bliss thy rural scenes bestow,  
To seek a nobler amidst scenes of woe,  
To traverse seas, range kingdoms, and bring home,  
Not the proud monuments of Greece or Rome,  
But knowledge such as only dungeons teach,  
And only sympathy like thine could reach;  
That grief, sequestered from the public stage,  
Might smooth her feathers, and enjoy her cage;  
Speaks a divine ambition, and a zeal,  
The boldest patriot might be proud to feel.  
Oh that the voice of clamour and debate,  
That pleads for peace till it disturbs the state,  
Were hushed in favour of thy generous plea,  
The poor thy clients, and heaven's smile thy fee!

Philosophy, that does not dream or stray,  
Walks arm in arm with nature all his way;  
Compasses earth, dives into it, ascends  
Whatever steep inquiry recommends,  
Sees planetary wonders smoothly roll  
Round other systems under her control,  
Drinks wisdom at the milky stream of light,  
That cheers the silent journey of the night,

And brings at his return a bosom charged  
With rich instruction, and a soul enlarged.  
The treasured sweets of the capacious plan,  
That heaven spreads wide before the view of man,  
All prompt his pleased pursuit, and to pursue  
Still prompt him, with a pleasure always new;  
He too has a connecting power, and draws  
Man to the centre of the common cause,  
Aiding a dubious and deficient fight  
With a new medium and a purer light.  
All truth is precious, if not all divine;  
And what dilates the powers must needs refine.  
He reads the skies, and watching every change,  
Provides the faculties an ampler range;  
And wins mankind, as his attempts prevail,  
A prouder station on the general scale.  
But reason still, unless divinely taught,  
Whate'er she learns, learns nothing as she ought;  
The lamp of revelation only shows,  
What human wisdom cannot but oppose,  
That man, in nature's richest mantle clad,  
And graced with all philosophy can add,  
Though fair without, and luminous within,  
Is still the progeny and heir of sin.

Thus taught, down falls the plumage of his pride;  
He feels his need of an unerring guide,  
And knows that falling he shall rise no more,  
Unless the power that bade him stand restore.  
This is indeed philosophy; this known  
Makes wisdom, worthy of the name, his own;  
And without this, whatever he discufs;  
Whether the space between the stars and us,  
Whether he measure earth, compute the sea,  
Weigh sunbeams, carve a fly, or spit a flea,  
The solemn trifler with his boasted skill  
Toils much, and is a solemn trifler still:  
Blind was he born, and his misguided eyes  
Grown dim in trifling studies, blind he dies.  
Self-knowledge truly learned of course implies  
The rich possession of a nobler prize;  
For self to self, and God to man revealed,  
(Two themes to nature's eye for ever sealed)  
Are taught by rays, that fly with equal pace  
From the same centre of enlightening grace.  
Here stay thy foot; how copious and how clear,  
The overflowing well of Charity springs here!  
Hark! 'tis the music of a thousand rills,  
Some thro' the groves, some down the sloping hills,



Winding a secret or an open course,  
 And all supplied from an eternal source.  
 The ties of nature do but feebly bind,  
 And commerce partially reclaims mankind;  
 Philosophy, without his heavenly guide,  
 May blow up self-conceit, and nourish pride;  
 But, while his province is the reasoning part,  
 Has still a veil of midnight on his heart:  
 'Tis truth divine, exhibited on earth,  
 Gives Charity her being and her birth.

Suppose (when thought is warm, and fancy flows,  
 What will not argument sometimes suppose?)  
 An isle possessed by creatures of our kind,  
 Endued with reason, yet by nature blind.  
 Let supposition lend her aid once more,  
 And land some grave optician on the shore:  
 He claps his lens, if haply they may see,  
 Close to the part where vision ought to be;  
 But finds that though his tubes assist the sight,  
 They cannot give it, or make darkness light.  
 He reads wise lectures, and describes aloud  
 A sense they know not, to the wondering crowd;  
 He talks of light and the prismatic hues,  
 As men of depth in erudition use;

But all he gains for his harangue is—Well,—  
What monstrous lies some travellers will tell!

The soul, whose fight all-quickenings grace  
renews,

Takes the resemblance of the good she views,  
As diamonds, stript of their opaque disguise,  
Reflect the noon-day glory of the skies.

She speaks of him, her author, guardian, friend,  
Whose love knew no beginning, knows no end,  
In language warm as all that love inspires,  
And in the glow of her intense desires,  
Pants to communicate her noble fires. }

She sees a world stark blind to what employs  
Her eager thought, and feeds her flowing joys;  
Though wisdom hail them, heedless of her call,  
Flies to save some, and feels a pang for all:  
Herself as weak as her support is strong,  
She feels that frailty she denied so long;  
And, from a knowledge of her own disease,  
Learns to compassionate the sick she sees.  
Here see, acquitted of all vain pretence,  
The reign of genuine Charity commence.  
Though scorn repay her sympathetic tears,  
She still is kind, and still she perseveres;

The truth she loves a fightless world blaspheme,  
'Tis childish dotage, a delirious dream,  
The danger they discern not they deny;  
Laugh at their only remedy, and die.

But still a soul thus touched can never cease,  
Whoever threatens war, to speak of peace.  
Pure in her aim, and in her temper mild,  
Her wisdom seems the weakness of a child:  
She makes excuses where she might condemn,  
Reviled by those that hate her, prays for them;  
Suspicion lurks not in her artless breast,  
The worst suggested, she believes the best;  
Not soon provoked, however stung and teased,  
And, if perhaps made angry, soon appeased;  
She rather waves than will dispute her right,  
And injured makes forgiveness her delight.

Such was the portrait an apostle drew,  
The bright original was one he knew;  
Heaven held his hand, the likeness must be true. }

When one, that holds communion with the skies,  
Has filled his urn where these pure waters rise,  
And once more mingles with us meaner things,  
'Tis even as if an angel shook his wings;



Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,  
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied.  
So when a ship well freighted with the stores,  
The sun matures on India's spicy shores,  
Has dropped her anchor and her canvases furled  
In some safe haven of our western world,  
'Twere vain inquiry to what port she went,  
The gale informs us, laden with the scent.

Some seek, when queasy conscience has its  
qualms,

To lull the painful malady with alms;  
But charity not feigned intends alone  
Another's good—their's centres in their own;  
And too short lived to reach the realms of peace,  
Must cease for ever when the poor shall cease.  
Flavia, most tender of her own good name,  
Is rather careless of her sister's fame:  
Her superfluity the poor supplies,  
But, if she touch a character, it dies.  
The seeming virtue weighed against the vice,  
She deems all safe, for she has paid the price:  
No charity but alms aught values she,  
Except in porcelain on her mantle-tree.

How many deeds, with which the world has rung,  
From pride, in league with ignorance, have sprung!  
But God o'errules all human follies still,  
And bends the tough materials to his will.  
A conflagration, or a wintry flood,  
Has left some hundreds without home or food;  
Extravagance and avarice shall subscribe,  
While fame and self-complacence are the bribe.  
The brief proclaimed, it visits every pew,  
But first the squire's, a compliment but due:  
With slow deliberation he unties  
His glittering purse, that envy of all eyes,  
And, while the clerk just puzzles out the psalm,  
Slides guinea behind guinea in his palm;  
Till finding, what he might have found before,  
A smaller piece amidst the precious store,  
Pinched close between his finger and his thumb,  
He half exhibits, and then drops the sum.  
Gold to be sure!—Throughout the town 'tis told  
How the good squire gives never less than gold.  
From motives such as his, though not the best,  
Springs in due time supply for the distressed;  
Not less effectual than what love bestows,  
Except that office clips it as it goes.

But lest I seem to sin against a friend,  
And wound the grace I mean to recommend,  
(Though vice derided with a just design  
Implies no trespass against love divine,)  
Once more I would adopt the graver style,  
A teacher should be sparing of his smile.  
Unless a love of virtue light the flame,  
Satire is, more than those he brands, to blame;  
He hides behind a magisterial air  
His own offences, and strips others bare;  
Affects indeed a most humane concern,  
That men, if gently tutored, will not learn;  
That mulish folly not to be reclaimed  
By softer methods, must be made ashamed;  
But (I might instance in St. Patrick's dean)  
Too often rails to gratify his spleen.  
Most satirists are indeed a public scourge;  
Their mildest physic is a farrier's purge;  
Their acrid temper turns, as soon as stirred,  
The milk of their good purpose all to curd:  
Their zeal begotten, as their works rehearse,  
By lean despair upon an empty purse,  
The wild assassins start into the street,  
Prepared to poignard whomsoever they meet.



No skill in swordmanship, however just,  
Can be secure against a madman's thrust;  
And even virtue so unfairly matched,  
Although immortal, may be pricked or scratched.  
When scandal has new minted an old lie,  
Or taxed invention for a fresh supply,  
'Tis called a satire, and the world appears  
Gathering around it with erected ears:  
A thousand names are tossed into the crowd;  
Some whispered softly, and some twanged aloud;  
Just as the sapience of an author's brain  
Suggests it safe or dangerous to be plain.  
Strange! how the frequent interjected dash  
Quickens a market, and helps off the trash;  
The important letters, that include the rest,  
Serve as a key to those that are suppressed;  
Conjecture gripes the victims in his paw,  
The world is charmed, and Scrib escapes the law.  
So, when the cold damp shades of night prevail,  
Worms may be caught by either head or tail;  
Forcibly drawn from many a close recess,  
They meet with little pity, no redress;  
Plunged in the stream they lodge upon the mud,  
Food for the famished rovers of the flood.

All zeal for a reform, that gives offence  
To peace and charity, is mere pretence :  
A bold remark, but which if well applied,  
Would humble many a towering poet's pride.  
Perhaps the man was in a sportive fit,  
And had no other play-place for his wit ;  
Perhaps, enchanted with the love of fame,  
He sought the jewel in his neighbour's shame ;  
Perhaps—whatever end he might pursue,  
The cause of virtue could not be his view.  
At every stroke wit flashes in our eyes ;  
The turns are quick, the polished points surprise,  
But shine with cruel and tremendous charms,  
That while they please possess us with alarms :  
So have I seen, (and hastened to the fight  
On all the wings of holiday delight)  
Where stands that monument of ancient power,  
Named with emphatic dignity, the tower,  
Guns, halberts, swords, and pistols, great and small,  
In starry forms disposed upon the wall ;  
We wonder, as we gazing stand below,  
That brass and steel should make so fine a show ;  
But though we praise the exact designer's skill,  
Account them implements of mischief still.

No works shall find acceptance in that day,  
When all disguises shall be rent away,  
That square not truly with the scripture plan,  
Nor spring from love to God, or love to man.  
As he ordains things sordid in their birth  
To be resolved into their parent earth;  
And, though the soul shall seek superior orbs,  
Whate'er this world produces, it absorbs;  
So self starts nothing, but what tends apace  
Home to the goal, where it began the race.  
Such as our motive is our aim must be,  
If this be servile, that can ne'er be free:  
If self employ us, whatsoe'er is wrought,  
We glorify that self, not him we ought;  
Such virtues had need prove their own reward,  
The judge of all men owes them no regard.  
True charity, a plant divinely nursed,  
Fed by the love, from which it rose at first,  
Thrives against hope and in the rudest scene,  
Storms but enliven its unfading green;  
Exuberant is the shadow it supplies,  
Its fruits on earth, its growth above the skies.  
To look at him, who formed us and redeemed,  
So glorious now, though once so disesteemed,



To see a God stretch forth his human hand,  
To uphold the boundless scenes of his command;  
To recollect that in a form like our's,  
He bruised beneath his feet the infernal powers,  
Captivity led captive, rose to claim  
The wreath he won so dearly in our name;  
That throned above all height he condescends  
To call the few that trust in him his friends;  
That in the heaven of heavens, that space he deems  
Too scanty for the exertion of his beams,  
And shines, as if impatient to bestow  
Life and a kingdom upon worms below;  
That light imparts a never-dying flame,  
Though feeble in degree, in kind the same.  
Like him the soul thus kindled from above  
Spreads wide her arms of universal love;  
And still enlarged as she receives the grace,  
Includes creation in her close embrace.  
Behold a Christian!—and without the fires  
The founder of that name alone inspires,  
Though all accomplishment, all knowledge meet,  
To make the shining prodigy complete,  
Whoever boasts that name—behold a cheat!

Were love; in these the world's last doting years,  
As frequent as the want of it appears,  
The churches warmed, they would no longer hold  
Such frozen figures, stiff as they are cold;  
Relenting forms would lose their power, or cease;  
And even the dipt and sprinkled live in peace:  
Each heart would quit its prison in the breast,  
And flow in free communion with the rest.  
The statesman, skilled in projects dark and deep,  
Might burn his useless Machiaval, and sleep;  
His budget often filled, yet always poor,  
Might swing at ease behind his study door,  
No longer prey upon our annual rents,  
Or scare the nation with its big contents:  
Disbanded legions freely might depart,  
And slaying man would cease to be an art.  
No learned disputants would take the field,  
Sure not to conquer, and sure not to yield;  
Both sides deceived, if rightly understood,  
Pelting each other for the public good.  
Did charity prevail, the press would prove  
A vehicle of virtue, truth, and love;  
And I might spare myself the pains to show  
What few can learn, and all suppose they know.

Thus have I sought to grace a serious lay  
With many a wild indeed but flowery spray,  
In hopes to gain, what else I must have lost,  
The attention pleasure has so much engrossed.  
But if unhappily deceived I dream,  
And prove too weak for so divine a theme,  
Let Charity forgive me a mistake  
That zeal, not vanity, has chanced to make,  
And spare the poet for his subject's sake.

}



## CONVERSATION.

*Nam neq; me tantum venientis sibilus auctri,  
Nec percussa juvant fluctû tam litora, nec quæ  
Saxosas inter decurrunt flumina valles.*

VIRG. Ecl. 5.

THOUGH nature weigh our talents, and dispense  
To every man his modicum of sense,  
And Conversation in its better part  
May be esteemed a gift and not an art,  
Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,  
On culture, and the sowing of the soil.  
Words learned by rote a parrot may rehearse,  
But talking is not always to converse;  
Not more distinct from harmony divine,  
The constant creaking of a country sign.

As Alphabets in ivory employ,  
Hour after hour, the yet unlettered boy,  
Sorting and puzzling with a deal of glee  
Those seeds of science called his A B C;  
So language in the mouths of the adult,  
Witness its insignificant result,  
Too often proves an implement of play,  
A toy to sport with and pass time away.  
Collect at evening what the day brought forth,  
Compress the sum into its solid worth,  
And if it weigh the importance of a fly,  
The scales are false, or Algebra a lie.  
Sacred interpreter of human thought,  
How few respect or use thee as they ought!  
But all shall give account of every wrong,  
Who dare dishonour or defile the tongue;  
Who prostitute it in the cause of vice,  
Or sell their glory at a market-price;  
Who vote for hire, or point it with lampoon,  
The dear-bought placeman, and the cheap buff-  
fool.

There is a prurience in the speech of some,  
Wrath stays him, or else God would strike them  
dumb:

His wise forbearance has their end in view,  
They fill their measure, and receive their due.  
The heathen law-givers of ancient days,  
Names almost worthy of a Christian's praise,  
Would drive them forth from the resort of men,  
And shut up every satyr in his den.

Oh come not ye near innocence and truth,  
Ye worms that eat into the bud of youth!  
Infectious as impure, your blighting power  
Taints in its rudiments the promised flower;  
Its odour perished and its charming hue,  
Thenceforth 'tis hateful, for it smells of you.

Not even the vigorous and headlong rage  
Of adolescence, or a firmer age,  
Affords a plea allowable or just  
For making speech the pamperer of lust;  
But when the breath of age commits the fault,  
'Tis nauseous as the vapour of a vault.

So withered stumps disgrace the sylvan scene,  
No longer fruitful, and no longer green;  
The sapless wood, divested of the bark,  
Grows fungous, and takes fire at every spark.

Oaths terminate, as Paul observes, all strife—  
Some men have surely then a peaceful life;



Whatever subject occupy discourse,  
The feats of Vestris, or the naval force,  
Asservation blustering in your face  
Makes contradiction such an hopeless case:  
In every tale they tell, or false or true,  
Well known, or such as no man ever knew,  
They fix attention, heedless of your pain,  
With oaths like rivets forced into the brain;  
And even when sober truth prevails throughout,  
They swear it, till affirmance breeds a doubt.  
A Persian, humble servant of the sun,  
Who though devout yet bigotry had none,  
Hearing a lawyer, grave in his address,  
With adjurations every word impress,  
Supposed the man a bishop, or at least,  
God's name so much upon his lips, a priest;  
Bowed at the close with all his graceful airs,  
And begged an interest in his frequent prayers.

Go, quit the rank to which ye stood preferred,  
Henceforth associate in one common herd;  
Religion, virtue, reason, common sense,  
Pronounce your human form a false pretence;  
A mere disguise, in which a devil lurks,  
Who yet betrays his secret by his works.

Ye powers who rule the tongue, if such there are,  
And make colloquial happiness your care,  
Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate,  
A duel in the form of a debate.  
The clash of arguments and jar of words,  
Worse than the mortal brunt of rival fwords,  
Decide no question with their tedious length,  
For opposition gives opinion strength,  
Divert the champions prodigal of breath,  
And put the peaceably-disposed to death.  
Oh thwart me not, fir Soph, at every turn,  
Nor carp at every flaw you may discern;  
Though syllogisms hang not on my tongue,  
I am not surely always in the wrong;  
'Tis hard if all is false that I advance,  
A fool must now and then be right by chance.  
Not that all freedom of dissent I blame;  
No—there I grant the privilege I claim.  
A disputable point is no man's ground;  
Rove where you please, 'tis common all around.  
Discourse may want an animated—No,  
To brush the surface and to make it flow;  
But still remember, if you mean to please,  
To press your point with modesty and ease.

The mark, at which my juster aim I take,  
Is contradiction for its own dear sake.  
Set your opinion at whatever pitch,  
Knots and impediments make something hitch;  
Adopt his own, 'tis equally in vain,  
Your thread of argument is snapt again;  
The wrangler, rather than accord with you,  
Will judge himself deceived, and prove it too.  
Vociferated logic kills me quite,  
A noisy man is always in the right,  
I twirl my thumbs, fall back into my chair,  
Fix on the wainscot a distressful stare,  
And, when I hope his blunders are all out,  
Reply discreetly—To be sure—no doubt!

DUBIUS is such a scrupulous good man—  
Yes—you may catch him tripping if you can.  
He would not, with a peremptory tone,  
Assert the nose upon his face his own;  
With hesitation admirably slow,  
He humbly hopes—presumes—it may be so.  
His evidence, if he were called by law  
To swear to some enormity he saw,  
For want of prominence and just relief,  
Would hang an honest man and save a thief.



Through constant dread of giving truth offence,  
He ties up all his hearers in suspense;  
Knows what he knows as if he knew it not,  
What he remembers seems to have forgot;  
His sole opinion, whatsoe'er befall,  
Centering at last in having none at all.  
Yet, though he tease and baulk your listening ear,  
He makes one useful point exceeding clear;  
Howe'er ingenious on his darling theme  
A sceptic in philosophy may seem,  
Reduced to practice, his beloved rule  
Would only prove him a consummate fool;  
Useless in him alike both brain and speech,  
Fate having placed all truth above his reach,  
His ambiguities his total sum,  
He might as well be blind, and deaf, and dumb.

Where men of judgment creep and feel their way,  
The positive pronounce without dismay;  
Their want of light and intellect supplied  
By sparks, absurdity strikes out of pride :  
Without the means of knowing right from wrong,  
They always are decisive, clear and strong;  
Where others toil with philosophic force,  
Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course;

Flings at your head conviction in the lump,  
And gains remote conclusions at a jump :  
Their own defect, invisible to them,  
Seen in another, they at once condemn ;  
And, though self-idolized in every case,  
Hate their own likenesses in a brother's face.  
The cause is plain, and not to be denied,  
The proud are always most provoked by pride,  
Few competitions but engender spite ;  
And those the most, where neither has a right.

The point of honour has been deemed of use,  
To teach good manners, and to curb abuse ;  
Admit it true, the consequence is clear,  
Our polished manners are a mask we wear,  
And at the bottom barbarous still and rude,  
We are restrained indeed, but not subdued.  
The very remedy, however sure,  
Springs from the mischief it intends to cure,  
And savage in its principle appears,  
Tried, as it should be, by the fruit it bears.  
'Tis hard indeed if nothing will defend  
Mankind from quarrels but their fatal end ;  
That now and then an hero must de cease,  
That the surviving world may live in peace.

Perhaps at last close scrutiny may show  
The practice dastardly, and mean, and low ;  
That men engage in it compelled by force,  
And fear, not courage, is its proper source.  
The fear of tyrant custom, and the fear  
Left fops should censure us, and fools should sneer.  
At least to trample on our Maker's laws,  
And hazard life for any or no cause,  
To rush into a fixt eternal state  
Out of the very flames of rage and hate,  
Or send another shivering to the bar  
With all the guilt of such unnatural war,  
Whatever use may urge, or honour plead,  
On reason's verdict is a madman's deed.  
Am I to set my life upon a throw,  
Because a bear is rude and furly? No—  
A moral, sensible, and well-bred man,  
Will not affront me, and no other can.  
Were I empowered to regulate the lists,  
They should encounter with well-loaded fists ;  
A Trojan combat would be something new,  
Let DARES beat ENTELLUS black and blue ;  
Then each might show, to his admiring friends,  
In honourable bumps his rich amends,



And carry, in contusions of his skull,  
A satisfactory receipt in full.

A story, in which native humour reigns,  
Is often useful, always entertains :  
A graver fact, enlisted on your side,  
May furnish illustration, well applied ;  
But sedentary weavers of long tales  
Give me the fidgets, and my patience fails.  
'Tis the most asinine employ on earth,  
To hear them tell of parentage and birth,  
And echo conversations, dull and dry,  
Embellished with—*He said*, and *So said I*.  
At every interview their route the same,  
The repetition makes attention lame ;  
We bustle up with unsuccessful speed,  
And in the saddest part cry—*Droll indeed !*  
The path of narrative with care pursue,  
Still making probability your clue ;  
On all the vestiges of truth attend,  
And let *them* guide you to a decent end.  
Of all ambitions man may entertain,  
The worst, that can invade a sickly brain,  
Is that, which angles hourly for surprise,  
And baits its hook with prodigies and lies.

Credulous infancy, or age as weak,  
Are fittest auditors for such to seek,  
Who to please others will themselves disgrace,  
Yet please not, but affront you to your face.  
A great retailer of this curious ware  
Having unloaded and made many stare,  
Can this be true?—an arch observer cries,  
Yes, (rather moved) I saw it with these eyes;  
Sir! I believe it on that ground alone;  
I could not, had I seen it with my own.

A tale should be judicious, clear, succinct;  
The language plain, and incidents well linked;  
Tell not as new what every body knows,  
And, new or old, still hasten to a close;  
There, centering in a focus round and neat,  
Let all your rays of information meet.  
What neither yields us profit nor delight  
Is like a nurse's lullaby at night;  
Guy Earl of Warwick and fair Eleanore,  
Or giant-killing Jack, would please me more.

The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,  
Makes half a sentence at a time enough;  
The dozing sages drop the drowsy strain,  
Then pause, and puff—and speak, and pause again.

Such often, like the tube they so admire,  
Important triflers! have more smoke than fire.  
Pernicious weed! whose scent the fair annoys,  
Unfriendly to society's chief joys,  
Thy worst effect is banishing for hours  
The sex, whose presence civilizes ours:  
Thou art indeed the drug a gardener wants,  
To poison vermin that infest his plants;  
But are we so to wit and beauty blind,  
As to despise the glory of our kind,  
And shew the softest minds and fairest forms  
As little mercy, as he grubs and worms?  
They dare not wait the riotous abuse,  
Thy thirst-creating steams at length produce,  
When wine has given indecent language birth,  
And forced the flood-gates of licentious mirth;  
For sea-born Venus her attachment shows  
Still to that element, from which she rose,  
And with a quiet, which no fumes disturb,  
Sips meek infusions of a milder herb.

The emphatic speaker dearly loves to oppose,  
In contact inconvenient, nose to nose.  
As if the gnomon on his neighbour's phiz,  
Touched with the magnet had attracted his.



His whispered theme, dilated and at large,  
Proves after all a wind-gun's airy charge,  
An extract of his diary—no more,  
A tasteless journal of the day before.  
He walked abroad, o'ertaken in the rain  
Called on a friend, drank tea, slept home again,  
Resumed his purpose, had a world of talk  
With one he stumbled on, and lost his walk.  
I interrupt him with a sudden bow,  
Adieu, dear Sir! lest you should lose it now.

I cannot talk with civet in the room,  
A fine puss-gentleman that's all perfume;  
The sight's enough—no need to smell a beau—  
Who thrusts his nose into a raree-show?  
His odoriferous attempts to please  
Perhaps might prosper with a swarm of bees;  
But we that make no honey, though we sting,  
Poets, are sometimes apt to maul the thing.  
'Tis wrong to bring into a mixt resort,  
What makes some sick, and others *a-la-mori*;  
An argument of cogence, we may say,  
Why such an one should keep himself away.

A graver coxcomb we may sometimes see,  
Quite as absurd, though not so light as he:

A shallow brain behind a serious mask,  
An oracle within an empty cask,  
The solemn fop; significant and budge;  
A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge;  
He says but little, and that little said  
Owes all its weight, like loaded dice, to lead.  
His wit invites you by his looks to come,  
But when you knock it never is at home:  
'Tis like a parcel sent you by the stage,  
Some handsome present, as your hopes presage;  
'Tis heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove  
An absent friend's fidelity and love,  
But when unpacked your disappointment groans  
To find it stuffed with brickbats, earth, and stones.

Some men employ their health, an ugly trick,  
In making known how oft they have been sick,  
And give us in recitals of disease  
A doctor's trouble, but without the fees;  
Relate how many weeks they kept their bed,  
How an emetic or cathartic sped;  
Nothing is slightly touched, much less forgot,  
Nose, ears, and eyes, seem present on the spot.  
Now the distemper, spite of draught or pill,  
Victorious seemed, and now the doctor's skill;

And now—alas for unforeseen mishaps !  
They put on a damp night-cap and relapse ;  
They thought they must have died they were so  
bad ;

Their peevish hearers almost wish they had.

Some fretful tempers wince at every touch,  
You always do too little or too much :  
You speak with life, in hopes to entertain,  
Your elevated voice goes through the brain ;  
You fall at once into a lower key,  
That's worse—the drone-pipe of an humble bee.  
The southern fash admits too strong a light,  
You rise and drop the curtain—now it's night.  
He shakes with cold—you stir the fire and strive  
To make a blaze—that's roasting him alive.  
Serve him with venison and he chooses fish ;  
With foal—that's just the sort he would not wish.  
He takes what he at first professed to loath,  
And in due time feeds heartily on both ;  
Yet still, o'erclouded with a constant frown,  
He does not swallow, but he gulps it down.  
Your hope to please him vain on every plan,  
Himself should work that wonder, if he can—



Alas! his efforts double his distress,  
He likes your's little, and his own still less.  
Thus always teasing others, always teased,  
His only pleasure is—to be displeased.

I pity bashful men, who feel the pain  
Of fancied scorn and undeserved disdain,  
And bear the marks upon a blushing face  
Of needless shame and self-imposed disgrace.  
Our sensibilities are so acute,  
The fear of being silent makes us mute.  
We sometimes think we could a speech produce  
Much to the purpose, if our tongues were loose;  
But, being tried, it dies upon the lip,  
Faint as a chicken's note that has the pip:  
Our wasted oil unprofitably burns,  
Like hidden lamps in old sepulchral urns.  
Few Frenchmen of this evil have complained;  
It seems as if we Britons were ordained,  
By way of wholesome curb upon our pride,  
To fear each other, fearing none beside.  
The cause perhaps inquiry may descry,  
Self searching with an introverted eye,  
Concealed within an unsuspected part,  
The vainest corner of our own vain heart:

For ever aiming at the world's esteem,  
Our self-importance ruins its own scheme;  
In other eyes our talents rarely shown,  
Become at length so splendid in our own,  
We dare not risque them into public view,  
Lest they miscarry of what seems their due.  
True modesty is a discerning grace,  
And only blushes in the proper place;  
But counterfeit is blind, and skulks through fear,  
Where 'tis a shame to be ashamed to appear:  
Humility the parent of the first,  
The last by vanity produced and nursed.  
The circle formed, we sit in silent state,  
Like figures drawn upon a dial-plate;  
Yes ma'am, and no ma'am, uttered softly, show  
Every five minutes how the minutes go;  
Each individual suffering a constraint  
Poetry may, but colours cannot paint;  
As if in close committee on the sky,  
Reports it hot or cold, or wet or dry;  
And finds a changing clime an happy source  
Of wise reflection, and well-timed discourse.  
We next enquire, but softly and by stealth,  
Like conservators of the public health,

Of epidemic throats, if such there are,  
And coughs, and rheums, and phthific, and catarrh.  
That theme exhausted, a wide chasm ensues,  
Filled up at last with interesting news,  
Who danced with whom, and who are like to wed,  
And who is hanged, and who is brought to bed:  
But fear to call a more important cause,  
As if it were treason against English laws.  
The visit paid, with ecstasy we come,  
As from a seven years transportation, home,  
And there resume an unembarrassed brow,  
Recovering what we lost we know not how,  
The faculties, that seemed reduced to nought,  
Expression and the privilege of thought.

The reeking, roaring hero of the chase,  
I give him over as a desperate case.  
Physicians write in hopes to work a cure,  
Never, if honest ones, when death is sure;  
And though the fox he follows may be tamed,  
A mere fox-follower never is reclaimed.  
Some farrier should prescribe his proper course,  
Whose only fit companion is his horse,  
Or if, deserving of a better doom,  
The noble beast judge otherwise, his groom.



Yet even the rogue that serves him, though he stand  
To take his honour's orders, cap in hand,  
Prefers his fellow-grooms with much good sense,  
Their skill a truth, his master's a pretence.  
If neither horse nor groom affect the squire,  
Where can at last his jockeyship retire?  
Oh to the club, the scene of savage joys,  
The school of coarse good fellowship and noise;  
There, in the sweet society of those,  
Whose friendship from his boyish years he chose,  
Let him improve his talent if he can,  
Till none but beasts acknowledge him a man.

Man's heart had been impenetrably sealed  
Like their's, that cleave the flood or graze the field,  
Had not his Maker's all-bestowing hand  
Given him a soul, and bade him understand;  
The reasoning power vouchsafed of course inferred  
The power to clothe that reason with his word;  
For all is perfect that God works on earth,  
And he that gives conception, aids the birth.  
If this be plain, 'tis plainly understood,  
What uses of his boon the giver would.  
The mind, dispatched upon her busy toil,  
Should range where Providence has blest the soil;

Visiting every flower with labour meet;  
And gathering all her treasures sweet by sweet.  
She should embue the tongue with what she sips,  
And shed the balmy blessing on the lips,  
That good diffused may more abundant grow,  
And speech may praise the power that bids it flow.  
Will the sweet warbler of the live-long night,  
That fills the listening lover with delight,  
Forget his harmony, with rapture heard,  
To learn the twittering of a meaner bird,  
Or make the parrot's mimicry his choice,  
That odious libel on an human voice?  
No—nature unsophisticate by man,  
Starts not aside from her Creator's plan;  
The melody, that was at first designed  
To cheer the rude forefathers of mankind,  
Is note for note delivered in our ears,  
In the last scene of her six thousand years:  
Yet fashion, leader of a chattering train,  
Whom man for his own hurt permits to reign,  
Who shifts and changes all things but his shape,  
And would degrade her votary to an ape,  
The fruitful parent of abuse and wrong,  
Holds an usurped dominion over his tongue;

There sits and prompts him with his own disgrace,  
Prescribes the theme, the tone, and the grimace,  
And when accomplished in her wayward school,  
Calls gentleman whom she has made a fool.

'Tis an unalterable fixed decree

That none could frame or ratify but she,

That heaven and hell, and righteousness and sin,

Snares in his path and foes that lurk within,

God and his attributes (a field of day

Where 'tis an angel's happiness to stray),

Fruits of his love and wonders of his might,

Be never named in ears esteemed polite.

That he who dares, when she forbids, be grave,

Shall stand proscribed, a madman or a knave,

A close designer not to be believed,

Or, if excused that charge, at least deceived.

Oh folly worthy of the nurse's lap,

Give it the breast, or stop its mouth with pap!

Is it incredible, or can it seem

A dream to any, except those that dream,

That man should love his Maker, and *that* fire,

Warming his heart, should at his lips transpire?

Know then, and modestly let fall your eyes,

And veil your daring crest that braves the skies;



That air of insolence affronts your God,  
You need his pardon, and provoke his rod:  
Now, in a posture that becomes you more  
Than that heroic strut assumed before,  
Know, your arrears with every hour accrue  
For mercy shown, while wrath is justly due.  
The time is short, and there are souls on earth,  
Though future pain may serve for present mirth,  
Acquainted with the woes that fear or shame,  
By fashion taught, forbade them once to name,  
And, having felt the pangs you deem a jest,  
Have proved them truths too big to be expressed.  
Go seek on revelation's hallowed ground,  
Sure to succeed, the remedy they found;  
Touched by that power that you have dared to mock,  
That makes seas stable, and dissolves the rock,  
Your heart shall yield a life-renewing stream,  
That fools, as you have done, shall call a dream.

It happened on a solemn even-tide,  
Soon after He that was our Surety died,  
Two bosom friends, each pensively inclined,  
The scene of all those sorrows left behind,  
Sought their own village, busied as they went  
In musings worthy of the great event:

They spake of him they loved, of him whose life,  
Though blameless, had incurred perpetual strife,  
Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,  
A deep memorial graven on their hearts.  
The recollection, like a vein of ore,  
The farther traced, enriched them still the more;  
They thought him, and they justly thought him, one  
Sent to do more than he appeared to have done;  
To exalt a people, and to place them high  
Above all else, and wondered he should die.  
Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,  
A stranger joined them, courteous as a friend,  
And asked them with a kind engaging air  
What their affliction was, and begged a share.  
Informed, he gathered up the broken thread,  
And, truth and wisdom gracing all he said,  
Explained, illustrated, and searched so well  
The tender theme, on which they chose to dwell,  
That reaching home, the night, they said, is near,  
We must not now be parted, sojourn here—  
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,  
And made so welcome at their simple feast,  
He blessed the bread, but vanished at the word,  
And left them both exclaiming, 'Twas the Lord!

Did not our hearts feel all he deigned to say,  
Did they not burn within us by the way?

Now their's was converse, such as it behoves  
Man to maintain, and such as God approves:  
Their views indeed were indistinct and dim,  
But yet successful, being aimed at him.  
Christ and his character their only scope,  
Their object, and their subject, and their hope,  
They felt what it became them much to feel,  
And, wanting him to loose the sacred seal,  
Found him as prompt, as their desire was true,  
To spread the new-born glories in their view.  
Well—what are ages and the lapse of time  
Matched against truths, as lasting as sublime?  
Can length of years on God himself exact,  
Or make that fiction which was once a fact?  
No—marble and recording brafs decay,  
And like the graver's memory pass away;  
The works of man inherit, as is just,  
Their author's frailty, and return to dust;  
But truth divine for ever stands secure,  
Its head is guarded as its base is sure;  
Fixed in the rolling flood of endless years,  
The pillar of the eternal plan appears,



The raving storm and dashing wave defies,  
Built by that architect, who built the skies.  
Hearts may be found, that harbour at this hour  
That love of Christ, and all its quickening power;  
And lips unstained by folly or by strife,  
Whose wisdom, drawn from the deep well of life,  
Tastes of its healthful origin, and flows  
A Jordan for the ablution of our woes.  
Oh days of heaven, and nights of equal praise,  
Serene and peaceful as those heavenly days,  
When souls drawn upwards, in communion sweet,  
Enjoy the stillness of some close retreat,  
Discourse, as if released and safe at home,  
Of dangers past and wonders yet to come,  
And spread the sacred treasures of the breast  
Upon the lap of covenanted rest.

What, always dreaming over heavenly things,  
Like angel heads in stone with pigeon-wings?  
Canting and whining out all day the word,  
And half the night? fanatic and absurd!  
Mine be the friend less frequent in his prayers,  
Who makes no bustle with his soul's affairs,  
Whose wit can brighten up a wintry day,  
And chase the splenetic dull hours away;

Content on earth in earthly things to shine,  
Who waits for heaven ere he becomes divine,  
Leaves fairs to enjoy those altitudes they teach,  
And plucks the fruit placed more within his reach.

Well spoken, Advocate of sin and shame,  
Known by thy bleating, Ignorance thy name.  
Is sparkling wit the world's exclusive right,  
The first fee-simple of the vain and light?  
Can hopes of heaven, bright prospects of an hour,  
That come to waft us out of sorrow's power,  
Obscure or quench a faculty, that finds  
Its happiest soil in the sereneest minds?  
Religion curbs indeed its wanton play,  
And brings the trifler under rigorous sway,  
But gives it usefulness unknown before,  
And, purifying, makes it shine the more.  
A Christian's wit is inoffensive light,  
A beam that aids, but never grieves the sight;  
Vigorous in age as in the flush of youth,  
'Tis always active on the side of truth;  
Temperance and peace insure its healthful state,  
And make it brightest at its latest date.  
Oh I have seen (nor hope perhaps in vain,  
Ere life go down, to see such sights again)

A veteran warrior in the Christian field,  
Who never saw the sword he could not wield;  
Grave without dulness, learned without pride,  
Exact, yet not precise, though meek, keen-eyed;  
A man that would have foiled at their own play  
A dozen would-be's of the modern day;  
Who, when occasion justified its use,  
Had wit as bright as ready to produce,  
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,  
Or from philosophy's enlightened page,  
His rich materials, and regale your ear  
With strains it was a privilege to hear:  
Yet above all his luxury supreme,  
And his chief glory, was the gospel theme;  
There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,  
His happy eloquence seemed there at home,  
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,  
But to treat justly what he loved so well.

It moves me more perhaps than folly ought,  
When some green heads, as void of wit as thought,  
Suppose *themselves* monopolists of sense,  
And wiser men's ability pretence.  
Though time will wear us, and we must grow old,  
Such men are not forgot as soon as cold,



Their fragrant memory will out-last their tomb,  
Embalmed for ever in its own perfume :  
And to say truth, though in its early prime,  
And when unstained with any grosser crime,  
Youth has a sprightliness and fire to boast,  
That in the valley of decline are lost,  
And virtue with peculiar charms appears,  
Crowned with the garland of life's blooming years;  
Yet age, by long experience well informed,  
Well read, well tempered, with religion warmed,  
That fire abated, which impels rash youth,  
Proud of his speed to overshoot the truth,  
As time improves the grape's authentic juice,  
Mellows and makes the speech more fit for use,  
And claims a reverence in its shortening day,  
That 'tis an honour and a joy to pay.  
The fruits of age, less fair, are yet more sound,  
Than those a brighter season pours around;  
And, like the stores autumnal suns mature,  
Through wintry rigours unimpaired endure.

What is fanatic frenzy, scorned so much,  
And dreaded more than a contagious touch?  
I grant it dangerous, and approve your fear,  
That fire is catching if you draw too near;

But sage observers oft mistake the flame,  
And give true piety that odious name.  
To tremble (as the creature of an hour  
Ought at the view of an almighty power)  
Before his presence, at whose awful throne  
All tremble in all worlds, except our own,  
To supplicate his mercy, love his ways,  
And prize them above pleasure, wealth, or praise,  
Though common sense allowed a casting voice,  
And free from bias, must approve the choice,  
Convicts a man fanatic in the extreme,  
And wild as madness in the world's esteem.  
But that disease, when soberly defined,  
Is the false fire of an overheated mind ;  
It views the truth with a distorted eye,  
And either warps or lays it useless by ;  
'Tis narrow, selfish, arrogant, and draws  
Its sordid nourishment from man's applause ;  
And while at heart sin unrelinquished lies,  
Presumes itself chief favourite of the skies.  
'Tis such a light as putrefaction breeds  
In fly-blown flesh, whereon the maggot feeds.  
Shines in the dark, but ushered into day  
The stench remains, the lustre dies away.

True bliss, if man may reach it, is composed  
Of hearts in union mutually disclosed;  
And, farewell else all hope of pure delight,  
Those hearts should be reclaimed, renewed, upright.  
Bad men, profaning friendship's hallowed name,  
Form, in its stead, a covenant of shame,  
A dark confederacy against the laws  
Of virtue, and religion's glorious cause:  
They build each other up with dreadful skill,  
As bastions set point blank against God's will;  
Enlarge and fortify the dread redoubt,  
Deeply resolved to shut a Saviour out;  
Call legions up from hell to back the deed;  
And, curst with conquest, finally succeed.  
But souls, that carry on a blest exchange  
Of joys, they meet with in their heavenly range,  
And with a fearless confidence make known  
The sorrows, sympathy esteems its own,  
Daily derive increasing light and force  
From such communion in their pleasant course,  
Feel less the journey's roughness and its length,  
Meet their opposers with united strength,  
And, one in heart, in interest, and design,  
Gird up each other to the race divine.



But conversation, choose what theme we may,  
And chiefly when religion leads the way,  
Should flow, like waters after summer showers,  
Not as if raised by mere mechanic powers.  
The Christian, in whose soul, though now distressed,  
Lives the dear thought of joys he once possessed,  
When all his glowing language issued forth  
With God's deep stamp upon its current worth,  
Will speak without disguise, and must impart,  
Sad as it is, his undissembling heart,  
Abhors constraint, and dares not feign a zeal,  
Or seem to boast a fire, he does not feel.  
The song of Sion is a tasteless thing,  
Unless, when rising on a joyful wing,  
The soul can mix with the celestial bands,  
And give the strain the compass it demands.

Strange tidings these to tell a world, who treat  
All but their own experience as deceit !  
Will they believe, though credulous enough  
To swallow much upon much weaker proof,  
That there are blest inhabitants of earth,  
Partakers of a new ethereal birth,  
Their hopes, desires, and purposes estranged  
From things terrestrial, and divinely changed,

Their very language of a kind, that speaks  
The soul's sure interest in the good she seeks,  
Who deal with scripture, its importance felt,  
As Tully with philosophy once dealt,  
And in the silent watches of the night,  
And through the scenes of toil-renewing light,  
The social walk, or solitary ride,  
Keep still the dear companion at their side?  
No—shame upon a self-disgracing age,  
God's work may serve an ape upon a stage  
With such a jest, as filled with hellish glee  
Certain invisibles as shrewd as he;  
But veneration or respect finds none,  
Save from the subjects of that work alone.  
The world grown old her deep discernment shows,  
Claps spectacles on her sagacious nose,  
Peruses closely the true Christian's face,  
And finds it a mere mask of fly grimace,  
Usurps God's office, lays his bosom bare,  
And finds hypocrisy close lurking there,  
And serving God herself through mere constraint,  
Concludes his unfeigned love of him, a feint.  
And yet, God knows, look human nature through,  
(And in due time the world shall know it too)

That since the flowers of Eden felt the blast,  
That after man's defection laid all waste,  
Sincerity towards the heart-searching God  
Has made the new-born creature her abode,  
Nor shall be found in unregenerate souls,  
Till the last fire burn all between the poles.  
Sincerity! Why 'tis his only pride,  
Weak and imperfect in all grace beside,  
He knows that God demands his heart entire,  
And gives him all his just demands require.  
Without it his pretensions were as vain,  
As having it he deems the world's disdain;  
That great defect would cost him not alone  
Man's favourable judgment, but his own;  
His birthright shaken, and no longer clear,  
Than while his conduct proves his heart sincere.  
Retort the charge, and let the world be told  
She boasts a confidence she does not hold;  
That, conscious of her crimes, she feels instead  
A cold misgiving, and a killing dread;  
That while in health the ground of her support  
Is madly to forget that life is short;  
That sick she trembles knowing she must die,  
Her hope presumption, and her faith a lie;



That while she dotes, and dreams that she believes,  
She mocks her Maker, and herself deceives,  
Her utmost reach, historical assent,  
The doctrines warpt to what they never meant;  
That truth itself is in her head as dull,  
And useless, as a candle in a scull,  
And all her love of God a groundless claim,  
A trick upon the canvass, painted flame.  
Tell her again, the sneer upon her face,  
And all her censures of the work of grace,  
Are insincere, meant only to conceal  
A dread she would not, yet is forced to feel;  
That in her heart the Christian she reveres,  
And while she seems to scorn him, only fears.

A poet does not work by square or line,  
As smiths and joiners perfect a design;  
At least we moderns, our attention less,  
Beyond the example of our fires digress,  
And claim a right to scamper and run wide,  
Wherever chance, caprice, or fancy guide.  
The world and I fortuitously met;  
I owed a trifle, and have paid the debt;  
She did me wrong, I recompensed the deed,  
And, having struck the balance, now proceed.

Perhaps however as some years have passed,  
Since she and I conversed together last,  
And I have lived recluse in rural shades,  
Which seldom a distinct report pervades,  
Great changes and new manners have occurred,  
And blest reforms, that I have never heard,  
And she may now be as discreet and wise,  
As once absurd in all discerning eyes.  
Sobriety perhaps may now be found,  
Where once intoxication pressed the ground;  
The subtle and injurious may be just,  
And he grown chaste that was the slave of lust;  
Arts once esteemed may be with shame dismissed;  
Charity may relax the miser's fist;  
The gamester may have cast his cards away,  
Forgot to curse, and only kneel to pray.  
It has indeed been told me (with what weight,  
How credibly, 'tis hard for me to state)  
That fables old, that seemed for ever mute,  
Revived are hastening into fresh repute,  
And gods and goddesses discarded long  
Like useless lumber, or a stroller's song,  
Are bringing into vogue their heathen train,  
And Jupiter bids fair to rule again;

That certain feasts are instituted now,  
Where Venus hears the lover's tender vow;  
That all Olympus through the country roves,  
To consecrate our few remaining groves,  
And echo learns politely to repeat  
The praise of names for ages obsolete;  
That having proved the weakness, it should seem,  
Of revelation's ineffectual beam,  
To bring the passions under sober sway,  
And give the moral springs their proper play,  
They mean to try what may at last be done,  
By stout substantial gods of wood and stone,  
And whether Roman rites may not produce  
The virtues of old Rome for English use.  
May such success attend the pious plan,  
May Mercury once more embellish man,  
Grace him again with long forgotten arts,  
Reclaim his taste, and brighten up his parts,  
Make him athletic as in days of old,  
Learned at the bar, in the palæstra bold,  
Divest the rougher sex of female airs,  
And teach the softer not to copy their's:  
The change shall please, nor shall it matter aught  
Who works the wonder, if it be but wrought.



'Tis time, however, if the case stands thus,  
For us plain folks, and all who side with us,  
To build our altar, confident and bold,  
And say as stern Elijah said of old,  
The strife now stands upon a fair award,  
If Israel's Lord be God, then serve the Lord:  
If he be silent, faith is all a whim,  
Then Baal is the God, and worship him.

Digression is so much in modern use,  
Thought is so rare, and fancy so profuse,  
Some never seem so wide of their intent,  
As when returning to the theme they meant;  
As mendicants, whose business is to roam,  
Make every parish but their own their home.  
Though such continual zigzags in a book,  
Such drunken reelings have an awkward look,  
And I had rather creep to what is true,  
Than rove and stagger with no mark in view;  
Yet to consult a little, seemed no crime,  
The freakish humour of the present time:  
But now to gather up what seems dispersed,  
And touch the subject I designed at first,  
May prove, though much beside the rules of art,  
Best for the public, and my wisest part.

And first, let no man charge me that I mean  
To clothe in fable every social scene,  
And give good company a face severe,  
As if they met around a father's bier;  
For tell some men, that pleasure all their bent,  
And laughter all their work; is life mispent,  
Their wisdom bursts into this sage reply,  
Then mirth is sin, and we should always cry.  
To find the medium asks some share of wit,  
And therefore 'tis a mark fools never hit,  
But though life's valley be a vale of tears;  
A brighter scene beyond that vale appears,  
Whose glory with a light, that never fades,  
Shoots between scattered rocks and opening shades,  
And, while it shows the land the soul desires,  
The language of the land she seeks inspires.  
Thus touched the tongue receives a sacred cure  
Of all that was absurd, profane, impure;  
Held within modest bounds the tide of speech  
Pursues the course, that truth and nature teach;  
No longer labours merely to produce  
The pomp of sound, or tinkle without use:  
Where'er it winds, the salutary stream,  
Sprightly and fresh, enriches every theme,

While all the happy man possessed before,  
The gift of nature, or the classic store,  
Is made subservient to the grand design,  
For which heaven formed the faculty divine.  
So should an idiot, while at large he strays,  
Find the sweet lyre, on which an artist plays,  
With rash and awkward force the chords he shakes,  
And grins with wonder at the jar he makes ;  
But let the wise and well-instructed hand  
Once take the shell beneath his just command,  
In gentle sounds it seems as it complained  
Of the rude injuries it late sustained,  
Till tuned at length to some immortal song,  
It sounds Jehovah's name, and pours his praise along.



## RETIREMENT.

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*studiis florens ignobilis oti.*

VIRG. Geor. Lib. 4.

HACKNEYED in business, wearied at that oar,  
Which thousands, once fast chained to, quit no more,  
But which, when life at ebb runs weak and low,  
All wish, or seem to wish, they could forego;  
The statesman, lawyer, merchant, man of trade,  
Pants for the refuge of some rural shade,  
Where, all his long anxieties forgot  
Amid the charms of a sequestered spot,  
Or recollected only to gild o'er,  
And add a smile to what was sweet before,  
He may possess the joys he thinks he sees,  
Lay his old age upon the lap of ease,

Improve the remnant of his wasted span,  
And, having lived a trifler, die a man.  
Thus conscience pleads her cause within the breast,  
Though long rebelled against, not yet suppressed,  
And calls a creature formed for God alone,  
For heaven's high purposes, and not his own ;  
Calls him away from selfish ends and aims,  
From what debilitates and what inflames,  
From cities humming with a restless crowd,  
Sordid as active, ignorant as loud,  
Whose highest praise is that they live in vain,  
The dupes of pleasure, or the slaves of gain,  
Where works of man are clustered close around,  
And works of God are hardly to be found,  
To regions where, in spite of sin and woe,  
Traces of Eden are still seen below,  
Where mountain, river, forest, field, and grove,  
Remind him of his Maker's power and love.  
'Tis well if, looked for at so late a day,  
In the last scene of such a senseless play,  
True wisdom will attend his feeble call,  
And grace his action ere the curtain fall.  
Souls, that have long despised their heavenly birth,  
Their wishes all impregnated with earth,

For threescore years employed with ceaseless care  
In catching smoke and feeding upon air,  
Conversant only with the ways of men,  
Rarely redeem the short remaining ten.  
Inveterate habits choke the unfruitful heart,  
Their fibres penetrate its tenderest part,  
And, draining its nutritious powers to feed  
Their noxious growth, starve every better seed.

Happy, if full of days—but happier far,  
If, ere we yet discern life's evening star,  
Sick of the service of a world, that feeds  
Its patient drudges with dry chaff and weeds,  
We can escape from custom's idiot sway,  
To serve the Sovereign we were born to obey.  
Then sweet to muse upon his skill displayed  
(Infinite skill) in all that he has made!  
To trace in nature's most minute design  
The signature and stamp of power divine,  
Contrivance intricate, expressed with ease,  
Where unassisted sight no beauty sees,  
The shapely limb and lubricated joint,  
Within the small dimensions of a point,  
Muscle and nerve miraculously spun,  
His mighty work, who speaks and it is done,



The invisible in things scarce seen revealed,  
To whom an atom is an ample field;  
To wonder at a thousand insect forms,  
These hatched, and those resuscitated worms,  
New life ordained and brighter scenes to share,  
Once prone on earth, now buoyant upon air,  
Whose shape would make them, had they bulk and  
size,

More hideous foes than fancy can devise;  
With helmet heads and dragon scales adorned,  
The mighty myriads, now securely scorned,  
Would mock the majesty of man's high birth,  
Despise his bulwarks, and unpeople earth:  
Then with a glance of fancy to survey,  
Far as the faculty can stretch away,  
Ten thousand rivers poured at his command  
From urns, that never fail, through every land;  
These like a deluge with impetuous force,  
Those winding modestly a silent course;  
The cloud-surmounting alps, the fruitful vales;  
Seas, on which every nation spreads her sails;  
The sun, a world whence other worlds drink light,  
The crescent moon, the diadem of night;

Stars countleſs, each in his appointed place,  
Faſt-anchored in the deep abyſs of ſpace—  
At ſuch a fight to catch the poet's flame,  
And with a rapture like his own exclaim,  
Theſe are thy glorious works, thou ſource of good,  
How dimly ſeen, how faintly underſtood !  
Thine, and upheld by thy paternal care,  
This univerſal frame, thus wondrous fair;  
Thy power divine, and bounty beyond thought,  
Adorned and praized in all that thou haſt wrought.  
Abſorbed in that immenſity I ſee,  
I ſhrink abaſed, and yet aſpire to thee;  
Inſtruct me, guide me to that heavenly day  
Thy words, more clearly than thy works, diſplay,  
That, while thy truths my groſſer thoughts refine,  
I may reſemble thee and call thee mine.

Oh bleſt proficiency ! ſurpaſſing all  
That men erroneouſly their glory call,  
The recompenſe that arts or arms can yield,  
The bar, the ſenate, or the tented field.  
Compared with this ſublimeſt life below,  
Ye kings and rulers, what have courts to ſhow ?  
Thus ſtudied, uſed and conſecrated thus,  
On earth what is, ſeems formed indeed for us;

Not as the plaything of a froward child,  
Fretful unless diverted and beguiled,  
Much less to feed and fan the fatal fires  
Of pride, ambition, or impure desires,  
But as a scale, by which the soul ascends  
From mighty means to more important ends,  
Securely, though by steps but rarely trod,  
Mounts from inferior beings up to God,  
And sees, by no fallacious light or dim,  
Earth made for man, and man himself for him.

Not that I mean to approve, or would enforce,  
A superstitious and monastic course :  
Truth is not local, God alike pervades  
And fills the world of traffic and the shades,  
And may be feared amidst the busiest scenes,  
Or scorned where business never intervenes.  
But 'tis not easy with a mind like our's,  
Conscious of weakness in its noblest powers,  
And in a world where, other ills apart,  
The roving eye misleads the careless heart,  
To limit thought, by nature prone to stray  
Wherever freakish fancy points the way ;  
To bid the pleadings of self-love be still,  
Relinquish our own and seek our Maker's will ;



To spread the page of scripture, and compare  
Our conduct with the laws engraven there;  
To measure all that passes in the breast,  
Faithfully, fairly, by that sacred test;  
To dive into the secret deeps within,  
To spare no passion and no favourite sin,  
And search the themes, important above all,  
Ourselves and our recovery from our fall.  
But leisure, silence, and a mind released  
From anxious thoughts how wealth may be in-  
creased,

How to secure, in some propitious hour,  
The point of interest or the post of power,  
A soul serene, and equally retired  
From objects too much dreaded or desired,  
Safe from the clamours of perverse dispute,  
At least are friendly to the great pursuit.

Opening the map of God's extensive plan,  
We find a little isle, this life of man;  
Eternity's unknown expanse appears  
Circling around and limiting his years.  
The busy race examine, and explore  
Each creek and cavern of the dangerous shore,

With care collect what in their eyes excells,  
Some shining pebbles, and some weeds and shells;  
Thus laden, dream that they are rich and great,  
And happiest he that groans beneath his weight:  
The waves overtake them in their serious play,  
And every hour sweeps multitudes away;  
They shriek and sink, survivors start and weep,  
Pursue their sport, and follow to the deep.  
A few forsake the throng; with lifted eyes  
Ask wealth of heaven, and gain a real prize,  
Truth, wisdom, grace, and peace like that above,  
Sealed with his signet, whom they serve and love;  
Scorned by the rest, with patient hope they wait  
A kind release from their imperfect state,  
And unregretted are soon snatched away  
From scenes of sorrow into glorious day.

Nor these alone prefer a life recluse,  
Who seek retirement for its proper use;  
The love of change, that lives in every breast,  
Genius, and temper, and desire of rest,  
Discordant motives in one centre meet,  
And each inclines its votary to retreat.  
Some minds by nature are averse to noise,  
And hate the tumult half the world enjoys,

The lure of avarice, or the pompous prize,  
That courts display before ambitious eyes;  
The fruits, that hang on pleasure's flowery stem,  
Whatever enchants them, are no snares to them.  
To them the deep recess of dusky groves,  
Or forest, where the deer securely roves,  
The fall of waters, and the song of birds,  
And hills, that echo to the distant herds,  
Are luxuries excelling all the glare  
The world can boast, and her chief favourites share.  
With eager step, and carelessly arrayed,  
For such a cause the poet seeks the shade,  
From all he sees he catches new delight,  
Pleased fancy claps her pinions at the sight,  
The rising or the setting orb of day,  
The clouds that flit, or slowly float away,  
Nature in all the various shapes she wears,  
Frowning in storms, or breathing gentle airs,  
The snowy robe her wintry state assumes,  
Her summer heats, her fruits, and her perfumes,  
All, all alike transport the glowing bard,  
Success in rhyme his glory and reward.  
Oh nature ! whose Elysian scenes disclose  
His bright perfections, at whose word they rose,



Next to that power, who formed thee and sustains,  
Be thou the great inspirer of my strains.  
Still, as I touch the lyre, do thou expand  
Thy genuine charms, and guide an artless hand,  
That I may catch a fire but rarely known,  
Give useful light though I should miss renown,  
And, poring on thy page, whose every line  
Bears proof of an intelligence divine,  
May feel an heart enriched by what it pays,  
That builds its glory on its Maker's praise.  
Woe to the man, whose wit disclaims its use,  
Glittering in vain, or only to seduce,  
Who studies nature with a wanton eye,  
Admires the work, but slips the lesson by ;  
His hours of leisure and recess employs  
In drawing pictures of forbidden joys,  
Retires to blazon his own worthless name,  
Or shoot the careless with a surer aim.

The lover too shuns business and alarms,  
Tender idolater of absent charms.  
Saints offer nothing in their warmest prayers,  
That he devotes not with a zeal like their's ;  
'Tis consecration of his heart, soul, time,  
And every thought that wanders, is a crime.

In sighs he worships his supremely fair,  
And weeps a sad libation in despair,  
Adores a creature, and, devout in vain,  
Wins in return an answer of disdain.  
As woodbine weds the plant within her reach,  
Rough elm, or smooth-grained ash, or glossy beech,  
In spiral rings ascends the trunk, and lays  
Her golden tassels on the leafy sprays,  
But does a mischief while she lends a grace,  
Straitening its growth by such a strict embrace;  
So love, that clings around the noblest minds,  
Forbids the advancement of the soul he binds;  
The suitor's air indeed he soon improves,  
And forms it to the taste of her he loves,  
Teaches his eyes a language, and no less  
Refines his speech and fashions his address;  
But farewell promises of happier fruits,  
Manly designs, and learning's grave pursuits;  
Girt with a chain he cannot wish to break,  
His only bliss is sorrow for her sake;  
Who will may pant for glory and excel,  
Her smile his aim, all higher aims farewell!  
Thyrsis, Alexis, or whatever name  
May least offend against so pure a flame,

Though sage advice of friends the most sincere  
Sounds harshly in so delicate an ear,  
And lovers of all creatures, tame or wild,  
Can least brook management, however mild,  
Yet let a poet (poetry disarms  
The fiercest animals with magic charms)  
Risque an intrusion on thy pensive mood,  
And woo and win thee to thy proper good.  
Pastoral images and still retreats,  
Umbrageous walks and solitary seats,  
Sweet birds in concert with harmonious streams,  
Soft airs, nocturnal vigils, and day dreams,  
Are all enchantments in a case like thine,  
Conspire against thy peace with one design,  
Sooth thee to make thee but a surer prey,  
And feed the fire, that wastes thy powers away.  
Up—God has formed thee with a wiser view,  
Not to be led in chains, but to subdue,  
Calls thee to cope with enemies, and first  
Points out a conflict with thyself, the worst.  
Woman indeed, a gift he would bestow  
When he designed a paradise below,  
The richest earthly boon his hands afford,  
Deserves to be beloved, but not adored.



Post away swiftly to more active scenes,  
Collect the scattered truths that study gleans,  
Mix with the world, but with its wiser part,  
No longer give an image all thine heart;  
Its empire is not her's, nor is it thine,  
'Tis God's just claim, prerogative divine.

Virtuous and faithful HEBERDEN ! whose skill  
Attempts no task it cannot well fulfil,  
Gives melancholy up to nature's care,  
And sends the patient into purer air.  
Look where he comes—in this embowered alcove  
Stand close concealed, and see a statue move :  
Lips busy, and eyes fixt, foot falling slow,  
Arms hanging idly down, hands clasped below,  
Interpret to the marking eye distress,  
Such as its symptoms can alone express.  
That tongue is silent now; that silent tongue  
Could argue once, could jest or join the song,  
Could give advice, could censure or commend,  
Or charm the sorrows of a drooping friend.  
Renounced alike its office and its sport,  
Its brisker and its graver strains fall short ;  
Both fail beneath a fever's secret sway,  
And like a summer-brook are past away.

This is a sight for pity to peruse,  
Till she resemble faintly what she views,  
Till sympathy contract a kindred pain,  
Pierced with the woes that she laments in vain.  
This, of all maladies that man infest,  
Claims most compassion, and receives the least:  
Job felt it, when he groaned beneath the rod  
And the barbed arrows of a frowning God;  
And such emollients as his friends could spare,  
Friends such as his for modern Jobs prepare.  
Blest, rather curst, with hearts that never feel,  
Kept snug in caskets of close-hammered steel,  
With mouths made only to grin wide and eat,  
And minds, that deem derided pain a treat,  
With limbs of British oak, and nerves of wire,  
And wit, that puppet-prompters might inspire,  
Their sovereign nostrum is a clumsy joke  
On pangs enforced with God's severest stroke.  
But with a soul, that ever felt the sting  
Of sorrow, sorrow is a sacred thing:  
Not to molest, or irritate, or raise  
A laugh at his expence, is slender praise;  
He, that has not usurped the name of man,  
Does all, and deems too little all, he can,

To assuage the throbbings of the festered part,  
And stanch the bleedings of a broken heart.  
'Tis not, as heads that never ache suppose,  
Forgery of fancy, and a dream of woes;  
Man is an harp whose chords elude the sight,  
Each yielding harmony disposed aright;  
The screws reversed (a task which if he please  
God in a moment executes with ease),  
Ten thousand thousand strings at once go loose,  
Lost, till he tune them, all their power and use.  
Then neither heathy wilds, nor scenes as fair  
As ever recompensed the peasant's care,  
Nor soft declivities with tufted hills,  
Nor view of waters turning busy mills,  
Parks in which art preceptress nature weds,  
Nor gardens interspersed with flowery beds,  
Nor gales, that catch the scent of blooming groves,  
And waft it to the mourner as he roves,  
Can call up life into his faded eye,  
That passes all he sees unheeded by:  
No wounds like those a wounded spirit feels,  
No cure for such, till God who makes them, heals.  
And thou, sad sufferer under nameless ill,  
That yields not to the touch of human skill,



Improve the kind occasion, understand  
A Father's frown, and kiss his chastening hand :  
To thee the day-spring, and the blaze of noon,  
The purple evening and resplendent moon,  
The stars, that sprinkled over the vault of night,  
Seem drops descending in a shower of light,  
Shine not, or undesired and hated shine,  
Seen through the medium of a cloud like thine :  
Yet seek him, in his favour life is found,  
All bliss beside a shadow or a sound :  
Then heaven, eclipsed so long, and this dull earth,  
Shall seem to start into a second birth !  
Nature, assuming a more lovely face,  
Borrowing a beauty from the works of grace,  
Shall be despised and overlooked no more,  
Shall fill thee with delights unfelt before,  
Impart to things inanimate a voice,  
And bid her mountains and her hills rejoice ;  
The sound shall run along the winding vales,  
And thou enjoy an Eden ere it fails.

Ye groves (the statesman at his desk exclaims,  
Sick of a thousand disappointed aims,)  
My patrimonial treasure and my pride,  
Beneath your shades your gray possessor hide,

Receive me languishing for that repose,  
The servant of the public never knows.  
Ye saw me once (ah those regretted days,  
When boyish innocence was all my praise!)  
Hour after hour delightfully allot  
To studies then familiar, since forgot,  
And cultivate a taste for ancient song,  
Catching its ardour as I mused along;  
Nor seldom, as propitious heaven might send,  
What once I valued and could boast, a friend,  
Were witnesses how cordially I press'd  
His undissembled virtue to my breast;  
Receive me now, not uncorrupt as then,  
Nor guiltless of corrupting other men,  
But versed in arts, that, while they seem to stay  
A falling empire, hasten its decay.  
To the fair haven of my native home,  
The wreck of what I was fatigued I come;  
For once I can approve the patriot's voice,  
And make the course he recommends my choice:  
We meet at last in one sincere desire,  
His wish and mine both prompt me to retire.  
'Tis done—he steps into the welcome chaise,  
Lolls at his ease behind four handsome bays,

That whirl away from business and debate  
The disincumbered Atlas of the state.  
Ask not the boy, who when the breeze of morn  
First shakes the glittering drops from every thorn,  
Unfolds his flock, then under bank or bush  
Sits linking cherry stones, or plaiting rush,  
How fair is freedom?—he was always free :  
To carve his rustic name upon a tree,  
To snare the mole, or with ill-fashioned hook  
To draw the incautious minnow from the brook,  
Are life's prime pleasures in his simple view,  
His flock the chief concern he ever knew ;  
She shines but little in his heedless eyes,  
The good we never miss we rarely prize :  
But ask the noble drudge in state affairs,  
Escaped from office and its constant cares,  
What charms he sees in freedom's smile express'd,  
In freedom lost so long, now repossess'd ;  
The tongue, whose strains were cogent as commands,  
Revered at home, and felt in foreign lands,  
Shall own itself a stammerer in that cause,  
Or plead its silence as its best applause.  
He knows indeed that whether dressed or rude,  
Wild without art, or artfully subdued,



Nature in every form inspires delight,  
But never marked her with so just a sight.  
Her hedge-row shrubs, a variegated store,  
With woodbine and wild roses mantled o'er,  
Green balks and furrowed lands, the stream, that  
spreads

Its cooling vapour over the dewy meads,  
Downs, that almost escape the enquiring eye,  
That melt and fade into the distant sky,  
Beauties he lately flighted as he passed,  
Seem all created since he travelled last.  
Master of all the enjoyments he designed,  
No rough annoyance rankling in his mind,  
What early philosophic hours he keeps,  
How regular his meals, how sound he sleeps!  
Not founder he, that on the mainmast head,  
While morning kindles with a windy red,  
Begins a long look-out for distant land,  
Nor quits till evening watch his giddy stand,  
Then swift descending with a seaman's haste,  
Slips to his hammoc, and forgets the blast.  
He chooses company, but not the squire's,  
Whose wit is rudeness, whose good breeding tires;

Nor yet the parson's, who would gladly come,  
Obsequious when abroad, though proud at home ;  
Nor can he much affect the neighbouring peer,  
Whose toe of emulation treads too near ;  
But wisely seeks a more convenient friend,  
With whom dismissing forms he may unbend !  
A man, whom marks of condescending grace  
Teach, while they flatter him, his proper place ;  
Who comes when called, and at a word withdraws,  
Speaks with reserve, and listens with applause ;  
Some plain mechanic, who, without pretence  
To birth or wit, nor gives nor takes offence ;  
On whom he rests well-pleased his weary powers,  
And talks and laughs away his vacant hours.  
The tide of life, swift always in its course,  
May run in cities with a brisker force,  
But no where with a current so serene,  
Or half so clear, as in the rural scene.  
Yet how fallacious is all earthly bliss,  
What obvious truths the wisest heads may miss ;  
Some pleasures live a month, and some a year,  
But short the date of all we gather here ;  
No happiness is felt, except the true,  
That does not charm thee more for being new.

This observation, as it chanced, not made,  
Or if the thought occurred, not duly weighed,  
He sighs—for after all by slow degrees  
The spot he loved has lost the power to please;  
To cross his ambling pony day by day,  
Seems at the best but dreaming life away;  
The prospect, such as might enchant despair,  
He views it not, or sees no beauty there;  
With aching heart, and discontented looks,  
Returns at noon to billiards or to books,  
But feels, while grasping at his faded joys,  
A secret thirst of his renounced employs.  
He chides the tardiness of every post,  
Pants to be told of battles won or lost,  
Blames his own indolence, observes, though late,  
'Tis criminal to leave a sinking state,  
Flies to the levee, and received with grace  
Kneels, kisses hands, and shines again in place.

Suburban villas, highway-side retreats,  
That dread th' encroachment of our growing streets,  
Tight boxes neatly fashed, and in a blaze  
With all a July sun's collected rays,  
Delight the citizen, who, gasping there,  
Breathes clouds of dust, and calls it country air.



Oh sweet retirement, who would balk the thought,  
That could afford retirement, or could not?  
'Tis such an easy walk, so smooth and straight,  
The second milestone fronts the garden gate;  
A step if fair, and if a shower approach,  
You find safe shelter in the next stage-coach.  
There, prisoned in a parlour snug and small,  
Like bottled wasps upon a southern wall,  
The man of business and his friends compressed,  
Forget their labours, and yet find no rest;  
But still 'tis rural—trees are to be seen  
From every window, and the fields are green;  
Ducks paddle in the pond before the door,  
And what could a remoter scene show more?  
A sense of elegance we rarely find  
The portion of a mean or vulgar mind,  
And ignorance of better things makes man,  
Who cannot much, rejoice in what he can;  
And he, that deems his leisure well bestowed  
In contemplation of a turnpike road,  
Is occupied as well, employs his hours  
As wisely, and as much improves his powers,  
As he, that slumbers in pavilions graced  
With all the charms of an accomplished taste.

Yet hence, alas ! insolvencies ; and hence  
The unpitied victim of ill-judged expence,  
From all his wearisome engagements freed,  
Shakes hands with business, and retires indeed.  
Your prudent grand-mammas, ye modern belles,  
Content with Bristol, Bath, and Tunbridge-wells,  
When health required it would consent to roam,  
Else more attached to pleasures found at home.  
But now alike, gay widow, virgin, wife,  
Ingenious to diversify dull life,  
In coaches, chaises, caravans, and hoys,  
Fly to the coast for daily, nightly joys,  
And all, impatient of dry land, agree  
With one consent to rush into the sea.—  
Ocean exhibits, fathomless and broad,  
Much of the power and majesty of God.  
He swathes about the swelling of the deep,  
That shines and rests, as infants smile and sleep;  
Vast as it is, it answers as it flows  
The breathings of the lightest air that blows;  
Curling and whitening over all the waste,  
The rising waves obey the increasing blast,  
Abrupt and horrid as the tempest roars,  
Thunder and flash upon the stedfast shores,

Till he, that rides the whirlwind, checks the rein,  
Then all the world of waters sleeps again.—  
Nereids or Dryads, as the fashion leads,  
Now in the floods, now panting in the meads,  
Votaries of pleasure still, wherever she dwells,  
Near barren rocks, in palaces, or cells,  
Oh grant a poet leave to recommend  
(A poet fond of nature, and your friend)  
Her slighted works to your admiring view ;  
Her works must needs excel, who fashioned you.  
Would ye, when rambling in your morning ride,  
With some unmeaning coxcomb at your side,  
Condemn the prattler for his idle pains,  
To waste unheard the music of his strains,  
And deaf to all the impertinence of tongue,  
That, while it courts, affronts and does you wrong,  
Mark well the finished plan without a fault,  
The seas globose and huge, the overarching vault,  
Earth's millions daily fed, a world employed  
In gathering plenty yet to be enjoyed,  
Till gratitude grew vocal in the praise  
Of God, beneficent in all his ways ;  
Graced with such wisdom, how would beauty shine !  
Ye want but that to seem indeed divine.



Anticipated rents, and bills unpaid,  
Force many a shining youth into the shade,  
Not to redeem his time, but his estate,  
And play the fool, but at a cheaper rate.  
There, hid in loathed obscurity, removed  
From pleasures left, but never more beloved,  
He just endures, and with a sickly spleen  
Sighs over the beauties of the charming scene.  
Nature indeed looks prettily in rhyme;  
Streams tinkle sweetly in poetic chime:  
The warblings of the blackbird, clear and strong,  
Are musical enough in Thomson's song;  
And Cobham's groves, and Windsor's green retreats,  
When Pope describes them, have a thousand sweets;  
He likes the country, but in truth must own,  
Most likes it, when he studies it in town.  
Poor Jack—no matter who—for when I blame  
I pity, and must therefore sink the name,  
Lived in his saddle, loved the chase, the course,  
And always, ere he mounted, kissed his horse.  
The estate, his fires had owned in ancient years,  
Was quickly distanced, matched against a peer's.  
Jack vanished, was regretted and forgot;  
'Tis wild good-nature's never-failing lot.

At length, when all had long supposed him dead,  
By cold submersion, razor, rope, or lead,  
My lord, alighting at his usual place,  
The Crown, took notice of an ostler's face.  
Jack knew his friend, but hoped in that disguise  
He might escape the most observing eyes,  
And whistling, as if unconcerned and gay,  
Curried his nag, and looked another way.  
Convinced at last, upon a nearer view,  
'Twas he, the same, the very Jack he knew,  
Overwhelmed at once with wonder, grief, and joy,  
He pressed him much to quit his base employ;  
His countenance, his purse, his heart, his hand,  
Influence and power, were all at his command:  
Peers are not always generous as well bred,  
But Granby was, meant truly what he said.  
Jack bowed, and was obliged—confessed 'twas  
    strange,

That so retired he should not with a change,  
But knew no medium between guzzling beer,  
And his old stint—three thousand pounds a year.

Thus some retire to nourish hopeless woe;  
Some seeking happiness not found below;  
Some to comply with humour, and a mind  
To social scenes by nature disinclined;

Some swayed by fashion, some by deep disgust;  
Some self-impoverished, and because they must;  
But few, that court retirement, are aware  
Of half the toils they must encounter there.

Lucrative offices are seldom lost  
For want of powers proportioned to the post:  
Give even a dunce the employment he desires,  
And he soon finds the talents it requires;  
A business with an income at its heels  
Furnishes always oil for its own wheels.  
But in its arduous enterprize to close  
His active years with indolent repose,  
He finds the labours of that state exceed  
His utmost faculties, severe indeed.  
'Tis easy to resign a toilsome place,  
But not to manage leisure with a grace;  
Absence of occupation is not rest,  
A mind quite vacant is a mind distressed.  
The veteran steed, excused his task at length,  
In kind compassion of his failing strength,  
And turned into the park or mead to graze,  
Exempt from future service all his days,  
There feels a pleasure perfect in its kind,  
Ranges at liberty, and snuffs the wind:



But when his lord would quit the busy road,  
To taste a joy like that he had bestowed,  
He proves less happy than his favoured brute,  
A life of ease a difficult pursuit.

Thought, to the man that never thinks, may seem  
As natural as when asleep to dream ;  
But reveries (for human minds will act)  
Specious in show, impossible in fact,  
Those flimsy webs, that break as soon as wrought,  
Attain not to the dignity of thought :  
Nor yet the swarms, that occupy the brain,  
Where dreams of dress, intrigue, and pleasure reign;  
Nor such as useless conversation breeds,  
Or lust engenders, and indulgence feeds.  
Whence, and what are we? to what end ordained?  
What means the drama by the world sustained?  
Business or vain amusement, care or mirth,  
Divide the frail inhabitants of earth.  
Is duty a mere sport, or an employ?  
Life an intrusted talent, or a toy?  
Is there, as reason, conscience, scripture, say,  
Cause to provide for a great future day,  
When, earth's assigned duration at an end,  
Man shall be summoned and the dead attend?

The trumpet—will it sound? the curtain rise?  
And show the august tribunal of the skies,  
Where no prevarication shall avail,  
Where eloquence and artifice shall fail,  
The pride of arrogant distinctions fall,  
And conscience and our conduct judge us all?  
Pardon me, ye that give the midnight oil  
To learned cares or philosophic toil,  
Though I revere your honourable names,  
Your useful labours and important aims,  
And hold the world indebted to your aid,  
Enriched with the discoveries ye have made;  
Yet let me stand excused, if I esteem  
A mind employed on so sublime a theme,  
Pushing her bold inquiry to the date  
And outline of the present transient state,  
And, after poisoning her adventurous wings,  
Settling at last upon eternal things,  
Far more intelligent, and better taught  
The strenuous use of profitable thought,  
Than ye, when happiest, and enlightened most,  
And highest in renown, can justly boast.

A mind unnerved, or indisposed to bear  
The weight of subjects worthiest of her care,

Whatever hopes a change of scene inspires,  
Must change her nature, or in vain retires.  
An idler is a watch, that wants both hands,  
As useless if it goes as when it stands.  
Books therefore, not the scandal of the shelves,  
In which lewd sensualists print out themselves;  
Nor those, in which the stage gives vice a blow,  
With what success let modern manners show;  
Nor his, who for the bane of thousands born  
Built God a church, and laughed his word to scorn,  
Skilful alike to seem devout and just,  
And stab religion with a fly side-thrust;  
Nor those of learned philologists, who chase  
A panting syllable through time and space,  
Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark,  
To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's ark;  
But such as learning without false pretence,  
The friend of truth, the associate of sound sense,  
And such as in the zeal of good design,  
Strong judgment labouring in the scripture mine,  
All such as manly and great souls produce,  
Worthy to live, and of eternal use:  
Behold in these what leisure hours demand,  
Amusement and true knowledge hand in hand.



Luxury gives the mind a childish cast,  
And while she polishes, perverts the taste;  
Habits of close attention, thinking heads,  
Become more rare as dissipation spreads,  
Till authors hear at length one general cry,  
Tickle and entertain us, or we die.  
The loud demand, from year to year the same,  
Beggars invention and makes fancy lame,  
Till farce itself, most mournfully jejune,  
Calls for the kind assistance of a tune;  
And novels (witness every month's review)  
Belie their name, and offer nothing new.  
The mind, relaxing into needful sport,  
Should turn to writers of an abler sort,  
Whose wit well managed, and whose classic style,  
Give truth a lustre, and make wisdom smile.  
Friends (for I cannot stint, as some have done,  
Too rigid in my view, that name to one;  
Though one, I grant it, in the generous breast  
Will stand advanced a step above the rest:  
Flowers by that name promiscuously we call,  
But one, the rose, the regent of them all)—  
Friends, not adopted with a school-boy's haste,  
But chosen with a nice discerning taste,

Well-born, well-disciplined, who, placed apart  
From vulgar minds, have honour much at heart,  
And, though the world may think the ingredients  
odd,

The love of virtue, and the fear of God !  
Such friends prevent what else would soon succeed,  
A temper rustic as the life we lead,  
And keep the polish of the manners clean,  
As their's, who bustle in the busiest scene ;  
For solitude, however some may rave,  
Seeming a sanctuary, proves a grave,  
A sepulchre, in which the living lie,  
Where all good qualities grow sick and die.  
I praise the Frenchman\*, his remark was shrewd—  
How sweet, how passing sweet, is solitude !  
But grant me still a friend in my retreat,  
Whom I may whisper—solitude is sweet.  
Yet neither these delights, nor aught beside,  
That appetite can ask, or wealth provide,  
Can save us always from a tedious day,  
Or shine the dulness of still life away ;  
Divine communion, carefully enjoyed,  
Or fought with energy, must fill the void.

\* Bruyere.

Oh sacred art, to which alone life owes  
Its happiest seasons, and a peaceful close,  
Scorned in a world, indebted to that scorn  
For evils daily felt and hardly borne,  
Not knowing thee, we reap with bleeding hands  
Flowers of rank odour upon thorny lands,  
And, while experience cautions us in vain,  
Grasp seeming happiness, and find it pain.  
Despondence, self-deserted in her grief,  
Lost by abandoning her own relief,  
Murmuring and ungrateful discontent,  
That scorns afflictions mercifully meant,  
Those humours tart as wine upon the fret,  
Which idleness and weariness beget;  
These, and a thousand plagues, that haunt the breast,  
Fond of the phantom of an earthly rest,  
Divine communion chafes, as the day  
Drives to their dens the obedient beasts of prey.  
See Judah's promised king, bereft of all,  
Driven out an exile from the face of Saul,  
To distant caves the lonely wanderer flies,  
To seek that peace a tyrant's frown denies.  
Hear the sweet accents of his tuneful voice,  
Hear him, overwhelmed with sorrow, yet rejoice;



No womanish or wailing grief has part,  
No, not a moment, in his royal heart ;  
'Tis manly music, such as martyrs make,  
Suffering with gladness for a Saviour's sake ;  
His soul exults, hope animates his lays,  
The sense of mercy kindles into praise,  
And wilds, familiar with a lion's roar,  
Ring with ecstatic sounds unheard before :  
'Tis love like his, that can alone defeat  
The foes of man, or make a desert sweet.

Religion does not censure or exclude  
Unnumbered pleasures harmlessly pursued ;  
To study culture, and with artful toil  
To meliorate and tame the stubborn soil ;  
To give dissimilar yet fruitful lands  
The grain, or herb, or plant, that each demands ;  
To cherish virtue in an humble state,  
And share the joys your bounty may create ;  
To mark the matchless workings of the power,  
That shuts within its seed the future flower,  
Bids these in elegance of form excel,  
In colour these, and those delight the smell,  
Sends nature forth the daughter of the skies,  
To dance on earth, and charm all human eyes ;

To teach the canvass innocent deceit,  
Or lay the landscape on the snowy sheet,  
These, these are arts pursued without a crime,  
That leave no stain upon the wing of time.

Me poetry (or rather notes that aim  
Feebly and vainly at poetic fame)  
Employs, shut out from more important views,  
Fast by the banks of the slow winding Ouse;  
Content if thus sequestered I may raise  
A monitor's, though not a poet's praise,  
And while I teach an art too little known,  
To close life wisely, may not waste my own.

# THE YEARLY DISTRESS,

OR

## TITHING TIME AT STOCK IN ESSEX.

Verses addressed to a Country Clergyman complaining of  
the disagreeableness of the day annually appointed  
for receiving the Dues at the Parsonage.

COME, ponder well, for 'tis no jest,  
To laugh it would be wrong,  
The troubles of a worthy priest  
The burden of my song.

This priest he merry is and blithe  
Three quarters of a year,  
But oh ! it cuts him like a fith, <sup>fithe</sup>,  
When tithing time draws near.

He then is full of fright and fears,  
As one at point to die,  
And long before the day appears  
He heaves up many a sigh.



For then the farmers come jog, jog,  
Along the miry road,  
Each heart as heavy as a log,  
To make their payments good.

In sooth, the sorrow of such days  
Is not to be expressed,  
When he that takes and he that pays  
Are both alike distressed.

Now all, unwelcome, at his gates  
The clumsy swains alight,  
With rueful faces and bald pates—  
He trembles at the sight.

And well he may, for well he knows  
Each bumpkin of the clan,  
Instead of paying what he owes,  
Will cheat him if he can.

So in they come—each makes his leg,  
And flings his head before,  
And looks as if he came to beg,  
And not to quit a score.

‘ And how does miss and madam do,  
‘ The little boy and all ?’  
‘ All tight and well. And how do you,  
‘ Good Mr. What-d’ye-call ?’

The dinner comes, and down they sit :  
Were ever such hungry folk ?  
There’s little talking, and no wit ;  
It is no time to joke.

One wipes his nose upon his sleeve,  
One spits upon the floor,  
Yet, not to give offence or grieve,  
Holds up the cloth before.

The punch goes round, and they are dull  
And lumpish still as ever ;  
Like barrels with their bellies full,  
They only weigh the heavier.

At length the busy time begins,  
‘ Come, neighbours, we must wag—’  
The money chinks, down drop their chins,  
Each lugging out his bag.

One talks of mildew and of frost,  
And one of storms of hail,  
And one of pigs, that he has lost  
By maggots at the tail.

Quoth one, 'A rarer man than you  
'In pulpit none shall hear :  
'But yet, methinks, to tell you true,  
'You sell it plaguy dear.'

Oh, why are farmers made so coarse,  
Or clergy made so fine !  
A kick, that scarce would move a horse,  
May kill a sound divine.

Then let the boobies stay at home ;  
'Twould cost him, I dare say,  
Less trouble taking twice the sum,  
Without the clowns that pay.



S O N N E T

ADDRESSED TO

HENRY COWPER, Esq.

On his emphatical and interesting Delivery of the Defence  
of WARREN HASTINGS, Esq. in the House of Lords.

COWPER, whose silver voice, tasked sometimes hard,  
Legends prolix delivers in the ears  
(Attentive when thou readest) of England's peers,  
Let verse at length yield thee thy just reward.  
Thou wast not heard with drowfy disregard,  
Expend'g late on all that length of plea  
Thy generous powers, but silence honoured thee  
Mute as ever gazed on Orator or Bard.  
Thou art not voice alone, but hast beside  
Both heart and head; and could'st with music sweet  
Of Attic phrase and senatorial tone,  
Like thy renowned forefathers, far and wide  
Thy fame diffuse, praised not for utterance more  
Of others' speech, but magic of thy own.

Lines addressed to

DR. DARWIN,

Author of "THE BOTANIC GARDEN."

Two Poets,\* (poets, by report,  
Not oft so well agree)  
Sweet Harmonist of Flora's court!  
Conspire to honour Thee.

They best can judge a poet's worth,  
Who oft themselves have known  
The pangs of a poetic birth  
By labours of their own.

We therefore pleased extol thy song,  
Though various yet complete,  
Rich in embellishment as strong,  
And learned as it is sweet.

No envy mingles with our praise,  
Though, could our hearts repine  
At any poet's happier lays,  
They would—they must at thine.

\* Alluding to the poem by Mr. Hayley, which accompanied this.

But we, in mutual bondage knit  
Of friendship's closest tie,  
Can gaze on even Darwin's wit  
With an unjaundiced eye ;

And deem the bard, whoever he be,  
And howsoever known,  
Who would not twine a wreath for Thee,  
Unworthy of his own.

ON

MRS. MONTAGUE'S

FEATHER-HANGINGS.

THE Birds put off their every hue  
To dress a room for Montague.

The Peacock fends his heavenly dyes,  
His *rainbows* and his *starry eyes* ;  
The Pheasant, plumes, which round infold  
His mantling neck with downy gold ;  
The Cock, his arched tail's azure show ;  
And, river-blanced, the Swan, his snow.



All tribes beside of Indian name,  
That glossy shine or vivid flame,  
Where rises and where sets the day,  
Whatever they boast of rich and gay,  
Contribute to the gorgeous plan,  
Proud to advance it all they can.  
This plumage neither dashing shower,  
Nor blasts, that shake the dripping bower,  
Shall drench again or discompose,  
But screened from every storm that blows,  
It boasts a splendour ever new,  
Safe with protecting Montague.

To the same patroness resort,  
Secure of favour at her court,  
Strong Genius, from whose forge of thought  
Forms rise, to quick perfection wrought,  
Which, though new-born, with vigour move,  
Like Pallas springing armed from Jove—  
Imagination scattering around  
Wild roses over furrowed ground,  
Which Labour of his frown beguile,  
And teach Philosophy a smile—  
Wit flashing on Religion's side,  
Whose fires to sacred Truth applied,

The gem, though luminous before,  
Obtrude on human notice more,  
Like sun-beams on the golden height  
Of some tall temple playing bright—  
Well-tutored Learning, from his books  
Dismissed with grave, not haughty, looks,  
*Their* order on his shelves exact,  
Not more harmonious or compact  
Than that, to which he keeps confined  
The various treasures of his mind—  
All these to Montague's repair,  
Ambitious of a shelter there.  
There Genius, Learning, Fancy, Wit,  
The ruffled plumage calm refit,  
(For stormy troubles loudest roar  
Around their flight who highest soar)  
And in her eye, and by her aid,  
Shine safe without a fear to fade.

She thus maintains divided sway  
With yon bright regent of the day;  
The Plume and Poet both we know  
Their lustre to his influence owe;  
And she the works of Phœbus aiding,  
Both Poet saves and Plume from fading.

## V E R S E S

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ALEXANDER  
SELKIRK, DURING HIS SOLITARY ABODE IN  
THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ.

### I.

I AM monarch of all I survey,  
My right there is none to dispute ;  
From the centre all round to the sea,  
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.  
Oh solitude ! where are the charms,  
That fages have seen in thy face ?  
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,  
Than reign in this horrible place.

### II.

I am out of humanity's reach,  
I must finish my journey alone,  
Never hear the sweet music of speech,  
I start at the sound of my own.  
The beasts, that roam over the plain,  
My form with indifference see ;  
They are so unacquainted with man,  
Their tameness is shocking to me.



III.

Society, friendship, and love,  
 Divinely bestowed upon man,  
 Oh, had I the wings of a dove,  
 How soon would I taste you again !  
 My sorrows I then might assuage  
 In the ways of religion and truth,  
 Might learn from the wisdom of age,  
 And be cheered by the fallies of youth.

IV.

Religion! what treasure untold  
 Resides in that heavenly word !  
 More precious than silver and gold,  
 Or all that this earth can afford.  
 But the sound of the church-going bell  
 These vallies and rocks never heard,  
 Never sigh'd at the sound of a knell,  
 Or smil'd when a sabbath appeared.

V.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport,  
 Convey to this desolate shore  
 Some cordial endearing report  
 Of a land, I shall visit no more.

My friends, do they now and then send  
A wish or a thought after me?  
O tell me I yet have a friend,  
Though a friend I am never to see.

## VI.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!  
Compared with the speed of its flight,  
The tempest itself lags behind,  
And the swift winged arrows of light.  
When I think of my own native land,  
In a moment I seem to be there;  
But alas! recollection at hand  
Soon hurries me back to despair.

## VII.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,  
The beast is laid down in his lair;  
Even here is a season of rest,  
And I to my cabin repair.  
There's mercy in every place,  
And mercy, encouraging thought!  
Gives even affliction a grace,  
And reconciles man to his lot.

ON THE PROMOTION OF  
EDWARD THURLOW, ESQ.

TO THE LORD HIGH CHANCELLORSHIP  
OF ENGLAND.

I.

ROUND Thurlow's head in early youth,  
And in his sportive days,  
Fair science poured the light of truth,  
And genius shed his rays.

II.

See! with united wonder cried  
The experienced and the sage,  
Ambition in a boy supplied  
With all the skill of age!

III.

Discernment, eloquence, and grace  
Proclaim him born to sway  
The balance in the highest place,  
And bear the palm away.



## IV.

The praise bestowed was just and wise;  
He sprang impetuous forth  
Secure of conquest, where the prize  
Attends superior worth.

## V.

So the best courser on the plain  
Ere yet he starts is known,  
And does but at the goal obtain  
What all had deemed his own.

## ODE TO PEACE.

## I.

COME, peace of mind, delightful guest!  
Return and make thy downy nest  
Once more in this sad heart:  
Nor riches I nor power pursue,  
Nor hold forbidden joys in view;  
We therefore need not part.

## II.

Where wilt thou dwell, if not with me,  
From avarice and ambition free,

And pleasure's fatal wiles ?

For whom, alas ! dost thou prepare  
The sweets, that I was wont to share,  
The banquet of thy smiles ?

## III.

The great, the gay, shall they partake  
The heaven, that thou alone canst make ?

And wilt thou quit the stream,  
That murmurs through the dewy mead,  
The grove and the sequestered shed,  
To be a guest with them ?

## IV.

For thee I panted, thee I prized,  
For thee I gladly sacrificed

Whatever I loved before ;  
And shall I see thee start away,  
And helpless, hopeless, hear thee say—  
Farewell ! we meet no more ?

## HUMAN FRAILITY.

### I.

WEAK and irresolute is man ;  
The purpose of to-day,  
Woven with pains into his plan,  
To-morrow rends away.

### II.

The bow well bent, and smart the spring,  
Vice seems already slain ;  
But passion rudely snaps the string,  
And it revives again.

### III.

Some foe to his upright intent  
Finds out his weaker part ;  
Virtue engages his assent,  
But pleasure wins his heart.

### IV.

'Tis here the folly of the wise  
Through all his art we view ;  
And, while his tongue the charge denies,  
His conscience owns it true.



## V.

Bound on a voyage of awful length  
 And dangers little known,  
 A stranger to superior strength,  
 Man vainly trusts his own.

## VI.

But oars alone can ne'er prevail  
 To reach the distant coast;  
 The breath of heaven must swell the sail,  
 Or all the toil is lost.

## THE MODERN PATRIOT.

## I.

REBELLION is my theme all day;  
 I only wish 'twould come  
 (As who knows but perhaps it may?)  
 A little nearer home.

## II.

Yon roaring boys, who rave and fight  
 On t'other side the Atlantic,  
 I always held them in the right,  
 But most so when most frantic.

## III.

When lawless mobs insult the court,  
That man shall be my toast,  
If breaking windows be the sport,  
Who bravely breaks the most.

## IV.

But oh ! for him my fancy culls  
The choicest flowers she bears,  
Who constitutionally pulls  
Your house about your ears.

## V.

Such civil broils are my delight,  
Though some folks can't endure them,  
Who say the mob are mad outright,  
And that a rope must cure them.

## VI.

A rope ! I wish we patriots had  
Such strings for all who need 'em—  
What ! hang a man for going mad ?  
Then farewell British freedom.

ON OBSERVING  
 SOME NAMES OF LITTLE NOTE  
 RECORDED IN  
 THE BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA.

Oh, fond attempt to give a deathless lot  
 To names ignoble, born to be forgot !  
 In vain, recorded in historic page,  
 They court the notice of a future age :  
 Those twinkling tiny lustres of the land  
 Drop one by one from Fame's neglecting hand ;  
 Lethæan gulphs receive them as they fall,  
 And dark oblivion soon absorbs them all.

So when a child, as playful children use,  
 Has burnt to tinder a stale last year's news,  
 The flame extinct, he views the roving fire—  
 There goes my lady, and there goes the squire,  
 There goes the parson, oh ! illustrious spark,  
 And there, scarce less illustrious, goes the clerk !

## R E P O R T

OF AN ADJUDGED CASE NOT TO BE FOUND  
IN ANY OF THE BOOKS.

### I.

BETWEEN Nose and Eyes a strange contest arose,  
The spectacles set them unhappily wrong;  
The point in dispute was, as all the world knows,  
To which the said spectacles ought to belong.

### II.

So Tongue was the lawyer, and argued the cause  
With a great deal of skill, and a wig full of  
learning;  
While chief baron Ear sat to balance the laws,  
So famed for his talent in nicely discerning.

### III.

In behalf of the Nose it will quickly appear,  
And your lordship, he said, will undoubtedly find  
That the Nose has had spectacles always in wear,  
Which amounts to possession time out of mind.

### IV.

Then holding the spectacles up to the court—  
Your lordship observes they are made with a  
straddle,



As wide as the ridge of the Nose is; in short,  
Designed to fit close to it, just like a saddle.

## V.

Again, would your lordship a moment suppose  
('Tis a case that has happened, and may be again)  
That the visage or countenance had not a Nose.  
Pray who would, or who could, wear spectacles  
then?

## VI.

On the whole it appears, and my argument shows  
With a reasoning, the court will never condemn,  
That the spectacles plainly were made for the Nose,  
And the Nose was as plainly intended for them.

## VII.

Then shifting his side, (as a lawyer knows how)  
He pleaded again in behalf of the Eyes:  
But what were his arguments few people know,  
For the court did not think they were equally wise.

## VIII.

So his lordship decreed with a grave solemn tone,  
Decisive and clear, without one if or but—  
That, whenever the Nose put his spectacles on,  
By day-light or candle-light—Eyes should be  
shut!

ON THE  
BURNING OF LORD MANSFIELD'S  
LIBRARY,

TOGETHER WITH HIS MSS.

BY THE MOB, IN THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1780.

I.

So then—the Vandals of our isle,  
Sworn foes to sense and law,  
Have burnt to dust a nobler pile  
Than ever Roman saw !

II.

And MURRAY sighs over Pope and Swift,  
And many a treasure more,  
The well-judged purchase and the gift,  
That graced his lettered store.

III.

*Their* pages mangled, burnt, and torn,  
The loss was *his alone*;  
But ages yet to come shall mourn  
The burning of *his own*.

ON THE SAME.

I.

WHEN wit and genius meet their doom  
In all devouring flame,  
They tell us of the fate of Rome,  
And bid us fear the same.

II.

Over MURRAY's loss the muses wept,  
They felt the rude alarm,  
Yet blessed the guardian care, that kept  
His sacred head from harm.

III.

There memory, like the bee, that's fed  
From Flora's balmy store,  
The quintessence of all he read  
Had treasured up before.

IV.

The lawless herd, with fury blind,  
Have done him cruel wrong;  
The flowers are gone—but still we find  
The honey on his tongue.

THE  
 LOVE OF THE WORLD REPROVED;  
 OR,  
 HYPOCRISY DETECTED\*.

Thus says the prophet of the Turk,  
 Good mussulman, abstain from pork ;  
 There is a part in every swine  
 No friend or follower of mine  
 May taste, whatever his inclination,  
 On pain of excommunication.  
 Such Mahomet's mysterious charge,  
 And thus he left the point at large.  
 Had he the sinful part express'd,  
 They might with safety eat the rest ;  
 But for one piece they thought it hard  
 From the whole hog to be debarred ;  
 And set their wit at work to find  
 What joint the prophet had in mind.

\* It may be proper to inform the reader that this piece has already appeared in print, having found its way, though with some unnecessary additions by an unknown hand, into the Leeds Journal, without the author's privity.



Much controversy straight arose,  
These choose the back, the belly those;  
By some 'tis confidently said  
He meant not to forbid the head;  
While others at that doctrine rail,  
And piously prefer the tail.  
Thus conscience freed from every clog,  
Mahometans eat up the hog.

You laugh—'tis well—The tale applied  
May make you laugh on t'other side.  
Renounce the world—the preacher cries.  
We do—a multitude replies.  
While one as innocent regards  
A snug and friendly game at cards;  
And one, whatever you may say,  
Can see no evil in a play;  
Some love a concert, or a race;  
And others shooting, and the chase.  
Reviled and loved, renounced and followed,  
Thus, bit by bit, the world is swallowed;  
Each thinks his neighbour makes too free,  
Yet likes a slice as well as he:  
With sophistry their sauce they sweeten,  
Till quite from tail to snout 'tis eaten.

ON  
THE DEATH  
OF  
MRS. (NOW LADY) THROCKMORTON'S  
BULFINCH.

Ye nymphs ! if e'er your eyes were red  
With tears o'er hapless favourites shed,  
O share Maria's grief !  
Her favourite, even in his cage,  
(What will not hunger's cruel rage?)  
Affained by a thief.

Where Rhenus strays his vines among,  
The egg was laid from which he sprung,  
And though by nature mute,  
Or only with a whistle blest,  
Well-taught he all the sounds express'd  
Of flagelet or flute.

The honours of his ebon poll  
Were brighter than the fleckest mole,  
His bosom of the hue  
With which Aurora decks the skies,  
When piping winds shall soon arise  
To sweep up all the dew.

Above, below, in all the house,  
Dire foe alike to bird and mouse,  
No cat had leave to dwell;  
And Bully's cage supported stood  
On props of smoothest-shaven wood,  
Large-built and latticed well.

Well-latticed—but the grate, alas!  
Not rough with wire of steel or brass,  
For Bully's plumage sake,  
But smooth with wands from Ouse's side,  
With which, when neatly peeled and dried,  
The swains their baskets make.

Night veiled the pole. All seemed secure.  
When led by instinct sharp and sure,  
Subsistence to provide,

A beast forth-fallied on the scout,  
 Long-backed, long-tailed, with whiskered snout,  
 And badger-coloured hide.

He, entering at the study-door,  
 Its ample area 'gan explore;  
     And something in the wind  
 Conjectured, sniffing round and round,  
 Better than all the books he found,  
     Food chiefly for the mind.

Just then, by adverse fate impressed,  
 A dream disturbed poor Bully's rest;  
     In sleep he seemed to view  
 A rat, fast-clinging to the cage,  
 And screaming at the sad presage,  
     Awoke and found it true.

For, aided both by ear and scent,  
 Right to his mark the monster went—  
     Ab, muse! forbear to speak  
 Minute the horrors that ensued;  
 His teeth were strong, the cage was wood—  
     He left poor Bully's beak.



He left it—but he should have ta'en ;  
That beak, whence issued many a strain  
    Of such mellifluous tone,  
Might have repaid him well, I wote,  
For silencing so sweet a throat,  
    Fast set within his own.

Maria weeps—The Muses mourn—  
So, when by Bacchanalians torn,  
    On Thracian Hebrus' side  
The tree-enchanter Orpheus fell ;  
His head alone remained to tell  
    The cruel death he died.

## THE ROSE.

THE rose had been washed, just washed in a shower,  
 Which Mary to Anna conveyed,  
 The plentiful moisture incumbered the flower,  
 And weighed down its beautiful head.

The cup was all filled, and the leaves were all wet,  
 And it seemed to a fanciful view,  
 To weep for the buds it had left with regret,  
 On the flourishing bush where it grew.

I hastily seized it, unfit as it was,  
 For a nosegay, so dripping and drowned,  
 And swinging it rudely, too rudely, alas !  
 I snapped it, it fell to the ground.

And such, I exclaimed, is the pitiless part  
 Some act by the delicate mind,  
 Regardless of wringing and breaking a heart  
 Already to sorrow resigned.

This elegant rose, had I shaken it less,  
 Might have bloomed with its owner a while,  
 And the tear, that is wiped with a little address,  
 May be followed perhaps by a smile.

## THE DOVES.

### I.

REASONING at every step he treads,  
Man yet mistakes his way,  
While meaner things, whom instinct leads,  
Are rarely known to stray.

### II.

One silent eve I wandered late,  
And heard the voice of love ;  
The turtle thus addressed her mate,  
And soothed the listening dove ;

### III.

Our mutual bond of faith and truth  
No time shall disengage,  
Those blessings of our early youth  
Shall cheer our latest age :

### IV.

While innocence without disguise,  
And constancy sincere,  
Shall fill the circles of those eyes,  
And mine can read them there ;

## V.

Those ills, that wait on all below,  
Shall ne'er be felt by me,  
Or gently felt, and only so,  
As being shared with thee.

## VI.

When lightnings flash among the trees,  
Or kites are hovering near,  
I fear lest thee alone they seize,  
And know no other fear.

## VII.

'Tis then I feel myself a wife,  
And press thy wedded side,  
Resolved an union formed for life  
Death never shall divide.

## VIII.

But oh! if fickle and unchaste,  
(Forgive a transient thought)  
Thou could become unkind at last,  
And scorn thy present lot,

## IX.

No need of lightning from on high,  
Or kites with cruel beak;  
Denied the endearments of thine eye,  
This widowed heart would break.



X.

Thus sang the sweet sequestered bird,  
 Soft as the passing wind,  
 And I recorded what I heard,  
 A lesson for mankind.

## A FABLE.

A RAVEN, while with glossy breast  
 Her new-laid eggs she fondly pressed,  
 And on her wicker-work high mounted,  
 Her chickens prematurely counted,  
 (A fault philosophers might blame  
 If quite exempted from the same)  
 Enjoyed at ease the genial day;  
 'Twas April as the bumpkins say,  
 The legislature called it May.  
 But suddenly a wind as high,  
 As ever swept a winter sky,  
 Shook the young leaves about her ears,  
 And filled her with a thousand fears,

}

Left the rude blast should snap the bough,  
And spread her golden hopes below.  
But just at eve the blowing weather,  
And all her fears were hushed together :  
And now, quoth poor unthinking Ralph,  
'Tis over, and the brood is safe;  
(For ravens, though as birds of omen  
They teach both conjurers and old women  
To tell us what is to befall,  
Can't prophesy themselves at all.)  
The morning came when neighbour Hodge,  
Who long had marked her airy lodge,  
And destined all the treasure there  
A gift to his expecting fair,  
Climbed like a squirrel to his dray,  
And bore the worthless prize away.

## M O R A L.

'Tis Providence alone secures  
In every change both mine and your's :  
Safety consists not in escape  
From dangers of a frightful shape ;  
An earthquake may be bid to spare  
The man, that's strangled by a hair.

Fate steals along with silent tread,  
Found ofteneft in what leaft we dread,  
Frowns in the ftorm with angry brow,  
But in the funfhine ftrikes the blow.

## A C O M P A R I S O N .

THE lapfe of time and rivers is the fame,  
Both fpeed their journey with a reftlefs ftream;  
The filent pace, with which they ftal away,  
No wealth can bribe, no prayers perfuade to ftay;  
Alike irrevocable both when paff,  
And a wide ocean fwallows both at laft.  
Though each refemble each in every part,  
A difference ftrikes at length the mufing heart;  
Streams never flow in vain; where ftreams abound,  
How laughs the land with various plenty crowned!  
But time, that fhould enrich the nobler mind,  
Neglected leaves a dreary wafte behind.

## ANOTHER.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

SWEET stream, that winds thro' yonder glade,  
Apt emblem of a virtuous maid—  
Silent and chaste she steals along,  
Far from the world's gay busy throng;  
With gentle yet prevailing force,  
Intent upon her destined course;  
Graceful and useful all she does,  
Blessing and blest where'er she goes,  
Pure-bosomed as that watery glass,  
And heaven reflected in her face.



# THE POET'S NEW-YEAR'S GIFT.

TO

MRS. (NOW LADY) THROCKMORTON.

MARIA! I have every good

For thee wished many a time,

Both sad, and in a cheerful mood,

But never yet in rhyme.

To wish thee fairer is no need,

More prudent, or more sprightly,

Or more ingenious, or more freed

From temper-flaws unfightly.

What favour then not yet possessed

Can I for thee require,

In wedded love already blest,

To thy whole heart's desire?

None here is happy but in part:

Full bliss is bliss divine;

There dwells some wish in every heart,

And doubtless one in thine.

That wish, on some fair future day,  
Which fate shall brightly gild,  
(Tis blameless, be it what it may)  
I wish it all fulfilled.

## ODE TO APOLLO.

ON AN INK-GLASS ALMOST DRIED IN THE SUN.

PATRON of all those luckless brains,  
That to the wrong side leaning  
Indite much metre with much pains,  
And little or no meaning,

Ah why, since oceans, rivers, streams,  
That water all the nations,  
Pay tribute to thy glorious beams,  
In constant exhalations,

Why, stooping from the noon of day,  
Too covetous of drink,  
Apollo, hast thou stolen away  
A poet's drop of ink?

Upborne into the viewless air,

It floats a vapour now,

Impelled through regions dense and rare,

By all the winds that blow.

Ordained perhaps ere summer flies,

Combined with millions more,

To form an Iris in the skies,

Though black and foul before.

Illustrious drop! and happy then

Beyond the happiest lot,

Of all that ever past my pen,

So soon to be forgot!

Phœbus, if such be thy design,

To place it in thy bow,

Give wit, that what is left may shine

With equal grace below.

## PAIRING TIME ANTICIPATED.

## A FABLE.

I SHALL not ask Jean Jacques Rousseau \*,  
 If birds confabulate or no;  
 'Tis clear that they were always able  
 To hold discourse, at least, in fable;  
 And e'en the child, who knows no better,  
 Than to interpret by the letter,  
 A story of a cock and bull,  
 Must have a most uncommon skull.

It chanced then on a winter's day,  
 But warm and bright, and calm as May,  
 The birds, conceiving a design  
 To forestal sweet St. Valentine,  
 In many an orchard, copse, and grove,  
 Assembled on affairs of love,

\* It was one of the whimsical speculations of this philosopher, that all fables which ascribe reason and speech to animals should be withheld from children, as being only vehicles of deception. But what child was ever deceived by them, or can be, against the evidence of his senses?



And with much twitter and much chatter,  
Began to agitate the matter.  
At length a Bulfinch, who could boast  
More years and wisdom than the most,  
Entreated, opening wide his beak,  
A moment's liberty to speak;  
And, silence publicly enjoined,  
Delivered briefly thus his mind.

My friends ! be cautious how ye treat  
The subject, upon which we meet ;  
I fear we shall have winter yet.

}

A Finch, whose tongue knew no control,  
With golden wing and satin poll,  
A last year's bird, who ne'er had tried  
What marriage means, thus pert replied.

Methinks the gentleman, quoth she,  
Opposite in the apple-tree,  
By his good will would keep us single  
Till yonder heaven and earth shall mingle,  
Or (which is likelier to befall)  
Till death exterminate us all.  
I marry without more ado,  
My dear Dick Redcap, what say you ?

Dick heard, and tweedling, ogling, bridling,  
Turning short round, strutting and fideling,  
Attested, glad, his approbation  
Of an immediate conjugation.  
Their sentiments so well expressed  
Influenced mightily the rest,  
All paired, and each pair built a nest.

But though the birds were thus in haste,  
The leaves came on not quite so fast,  
And destiny, that sometimes bears  
An aspect stern on man's affairs,  
Not altogether smiled on theirs.  
The wind, of late breathed gently forth,  
Now shifted east and east by north;  
Bare trees and shrubs but ill, you know,  
Could shelter them from rain or snow,  
Stepping into their nests, they paddled,  
Themselves were chilled, their eggs were addled;  
Soon every father bird and mother  
Grew quarrelsome, and pecked each other,  
Parted without the least regret,  
Except that they had ever met,  
And learned in future to be wiser,  
Than to neglect a good adviser.

## INSTRUCTION.

Misses ! the tale that I relate  
This lesson seems to carry—  
Choose not alone a proper mate,  
But proper time to marry.

## THE DOG AND THE WATER-LILY.

## NO FABLE.

THE noon was shady, and soft airs  
Swept Ouse's silent tide,  
When, 'scaped from literary cares,  
I wandered on his side.

My spaniel, prettiest of his race,  
And high in pedigree,  
(Two nymphs\* adorned with every grace  
That spaniel found for me)

\* Sir Robert Gunning's daughters.

Now wantoned lost in flags and reeds,  
Now starting into fight  
Pursued the swallow o'er the meads  
With scarce a flower flight.

It was the time when Ouse displayed  
His lilies newly blown;  
Their beauties I intent surveyed,  
And one I wished my own.

With cane extended far I fought  
To steer it close to land;  
But still the prize, though nearly caught,  
Escaped my eager hand.

*Beau* marked my unsuccessful pains  
With fixt confederate face,  
And puzzling fat his puppy brains  
To comprehend the case.

But with a chirrup clear and strong,  
Dispersing all his dream,  
I thence withdrew, and followed long  
The windings of the stream.



My ramble finished, I returned.

*Beau* trotting far before

The floating wreath again discerned,

And plunging left the shore.

I saw him with that lily cropped

Impatient swim to meet

My quick approach, and soon he dropped

The treasure at my feet.

Charmed with the sight, the world, I cried,

Shall hear of this thy deed :

My dog shall mortify the pride

Of man's superior breed :

But chief myself I will enjoin,

Awake at duty's call,

To shew a love as prompt as thine

To Him who gives me all.

## THE POET, THE OYSTER, AND SENSITIVE PLANT.

AN Oyfter, cast upon the shore,  
Was heard, though never heard before,  
Complaining in a speech well worded,  
And worthy thus to be recorded—

Ah, hapless wretch ! condemned to dwell  
For ever in my native shell ;  
Ordained to move when others please,  
Not for my own content or ease ;  
But tossed and buffeted about,  
Now *in* the water and now *out*.  
'Twere better to be born a stone,  
Of ruder shape, and feeling none,  
Than with a tendernefs like mine,  
And fenfibilities fo fine !  
I envy that unfeeling shrub,  
Fast rooted againft every rub.  
The plant he meant grew not far off,  
And felt the sneer with fcorn enough ;

Was hurt, disgusted, mortified,  
And with asperity replied.

When, cry the botanists, and stare,  
Did plants called sensitive grow there?  
No matter when—a poet's muse is  
To make them grow just where she chooses.

You shapeless nothing in a dish,  
You that are but almost a fish,  
I scorn your coarse insinuation,  
And have most plentiful occasion  
To wish myself the rock I view,  
Or such another dolt as you:  
For many a grave and learned clerk,  
And many a gay unlettered spark,  
With curious touch examines me,  
If I can feel as well as he;  
And when I bend, retire, and shrink,  
Says—Well, 'tis more than one would think!  
Thus life is spent (oh fie upon't!)  
In being touched, and crying—Don't!

A poet, in his evening walk,  
O'erheard and checked this idle talk.  
And your fine sense, he said, and your's,  
Whatever evil it endures,

Deserves not, if so soon offended,  
Much to be pitied or commended.  
Disputes, though short, are far too long,  
Where both alike are in the wrong;  
Your feelings, in their full amount,  
Are all upon your own account.

You, in your grotto-work enclosed,  
Complain of being thus exposed;  
Yet nothing feel in that rough coat,  
Save when the knife is at your throat,  
Wherever driven by wind or tide,  
Exempt from every ill beside.

And as for you, my Lady Squeamish,  
Who reckon every touch a blemish,  
If all the plants, that can be found  
Embellishing the scene around,  
Should droop and wither where they grow,  
You would not feel at all—not you.  
The noblest minds their virtue prove  
By pity, sympathy, and love:  
These, these are feelings truly fine,  
And prove their owner half divine.

His censure reached them as he dealt it,  
And each by shrinking showed he felt it.



## THE SHRUBBERY.

WRITTEN IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION.

### I.

Oh, happy shades—to me unblest !  
    Friendly to peace, but not to me !  
How ill the scene that offers rest,  
    And heart, that cannot rest, agree !

### II.

This glassy stream, that spreading pine,  
    Those alders quivering to the breeze,  
Might soothe a soul less hurt than mine,  
    And please, if any thing could please.

### III.

But fix'd unalterable care  
    Foregoes not what she feels within,  
Shows the same sadness every where,  
    And flights the season and the scene.

## IV.

For all that pleased in wood or lawn,  
While peace possessed these silent bowers,  
Her animating smile withdrawn,  
Has lost its beauties and its powers.

## V.

The faint or moralist should tread  
This moss-grown alley musing slow;  
They seek like me the secret shade,  
But not like me to nourish woe!

## VI.

Me fruitful scenes and prospects waste  
Alike admonish not to roam;  
These tell me of enjoyments past,  
And those of sorrows yet to come.

## THE WINTER NOSEGAY.

### I

WHAT nature, alas! has denied  
To the delicate growth of our isle,  
Art has in a measure supplied,  
And winter is decked with a smile.  
See, Mary, what beauties I bring  
From the shelter of that sunny shed,  
Where the flowers have the charms of the  
spring,  
Though abroad they are frozen and dead.

### II.

'Tis a bower of Arcadian sweets,  
Where Flora is still in her prime,  
A fortress, to which she retreats  
From the cruel assaults of the clime.  
While earth wears a mantle of snow,  
These pinks are as fresh and as gay  
As the fairest and sweetest, that blow  
On the beautiful bosom of May.

## III.

See how they have safely survived  
The frowns of a sky so severe;  
Such Mary's true love, that has lived  
Through many a turbulent year.  
The charms of the late blowing rose  
Seem graced with a livelier hue,  
And the winter of sorrow best shows  
The truth of a friend such as you.

## MUTUAL FORBEARANCE

NECESSARY TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE MARRIED  
STATE.

THE lady thus addressed her spouse—  
What a mere dungeon is this house!  
By no means large enough; and was it,  
Yet this dull room, and that dark closet,  
Those hangings with their worn-out graces,  
Long beards, long noses, and pale faces,



Are such an antiquated scene,  
They overwhelm me with the spleen.  
Sir Humphrey, shooting in the dark,  
Makes answer quite beside the mark :  
No doubt, my dear, I bade him come,  
Engaged myself to be at home,  
And shall expect him at the door,  
Precisely when the clock strikes four.

You are so deaf, the lady cried,  
(And raised her voice, and frowned beside)  
You are so sadly deaf, my dear,  
What shall I do to make you hear ?

Dismiss poor Harry ! he replies ;  
Some people are more nice than wise,  
For one slight trespass all this stir ?  
What if he did ride whip and spur,  
'Twas but a mile—your favourite horse  
Will never look one hair the worse.

Well, I protest 'tis past all bearing—  
Child ! I am rather hard of hearing—  
Yes, truly—one must scream and bawl,  
I tell you, you can't hear at all !  
Then, with a voice exceeding low,  
No matter if you hear or no.

Alas ! and is domestic strife,  
That forest ill of human life,  
A plague so little to be feared,  
As to be wantonly incurred,  
To gratify a fretful passion,  
On every trivial provocation ?  
The kindest and the happiest pair  
Will find occasion to forbear ;  
And something, every day they live,  
To pity, and perhaps forgive.  
But if infirmities, that fall  
In common to the lot of all,  
A blemish or a sense impaired,  
Are crimes so little to be spared,  
Then farewell all, that must create  
The comfort of the wedded state ;  
Instead of harmony, 'tis jar,  
And tumult, and intestine war.

The love, that cheers life's latest stage,  
Proof against sickness and old age,  
Preserved by virtue from declension,  
Becomes not weary of attention ;  
But lives, when that exterior grace,  
Which first inspired the flame decays.

'Tis gentle, delicate, and kind,  
To faults compassionate or blind,  
And will with sympathy endure  
Those evils, it would gladly cure :  
But angry, coarse, and harsh expression  
Shows love to be a mere profession;  
Proves that the heart is none of his,  
Or soon expels him if it is.

THE  
NEGRO'S COMPLAINT.

FORCED from home and all its pleasures,  
Afric's coast I left forlorn;  
To increase a stranger's treasures,  
O'er the raging billows borne.  
Men from England bought and sold me,  
Paid my price in paltry gold ;  
But, though theirs they have enrolled me,  
Minds are never to be sold.

Still in thought as free as ever,  
What are England's rights, I ask,  
Me from my delights to sever,  
Me to torture, me to task?  
Fleecy locks and black complexion  
Cannot forfeit nature's claim;  
Skins may differ, but affection  
Dwells in white and black the same.

Why did all-creating nature  
Make the plant, for which we toil?  
Sighs must fan it, tears must water,  
Sweat of ours must dress the soil.  
Think, ye masters iron-hearted,  
Lolling at your jovial boards;  
Think how many backs have smarted  
For the sweets, your cane affords.

Is there, as ye sometimes tell us,  
Is there one, who reigns on high?  
Has he bid you buy and sell us,  
Speaking from his throne the sky?  
Ask him, if your knotted scourges,  
Matches, blood-extorting screws,  
Are the means, which duty urges  
Agents of his will to use?



Hark! he answers—Wild tornadoes,  
Strewing yonder sea with wrecks;  
Wasting towns, plantations, meadows,  
Are the voice, with which he speaks.  
He, foreseeing what vexations  
Afric's sons should undergo,  
Fixed their tyrants' habitations  
Where his whirlwinds answer—no.

By our blood in Afric wasted,  
Ere our necks received the chain;  
By the miseries we have tasted,  
Crossing in your barks the main;  
By our sufferings, since ye brought us  
To the man-degrading mart;  
All sustained by patience, taught us  
Only by a broken heart :

Deem our nation brutes no longer,  
Till some reason ye shall find  
Worthier of regard, and stronger  
Than the colour of our kind.  
Slaves of gold, whose fordid dealings  
Tarnish all your boasted powers,  
Prove that you have human feelings,  
Ere you proudly question ours !

## PITY FOR POOR AFRICANS.

*Video meliora proboque  
Deteriora sequor.—*

I own I am shocked at the purchase of slaves,  
And fear those, who buy them and sell them, are  
    knaves ;  
What I hear of their hardships, their tortures, and  
    groans,  
Is almost enough to draw pity from stones.

I pity them greatly, but I must be mum,  
For how could we do without sugar and rum ?  
Especially sugar, so needful we see ?  
What give up our deserts, our coffee, and tea !

Besides, if we do, the French, Dutch, and Danes,  
Will heartily thank us, no doubt, for our pains ;  
If we do not buy the poor creatures, they will,  
And tortures and groans will be multiplied still.

If foreigners likewise would give up the trade,  
Much more in behalf of your wish might be said;  
But, while they get riches by purchasing blacks,  
Pray tell me why we may not also go snacks?

Your scruples and arguments bring to my mind  
A story so pat, you may think it is coined,  
On purpose to answer you out of my mint;  
But I can assure you I saw it in print.

A youngster at school, more sedate than the rest,  
Had once his integrity put to the test;  
His comrades had plotted an orchard to rob,  
And asked him to go and assist in the job.

He was shocked, sir, like you, and answered—

“ Oh no!

What! rob our good neighbour! I pray you  
don't go;

Besides the man's poor, his orchard's his bread,  
Then think of his children, for they must be fed.”

“ You speak very fine, and you look very grave,  
But apples we want, and apples we'll have;  
If you will go with us, you shall have a share,  
If not, you shall have neither apple nor pear.”

They spoke, and Tom pondered—"I see they will go:  
Poor man! what a pity to injure him so!  
Poor man! I would save him his fruit if I cou'd,  
But staying behind will do him no good.

"If the matter depended alone upon me,  
His apples might hang till they dropt from the  
tree;  
But, since they will take them, I think I'll go too,  
He will lose none by me, though I get a few."

His scruples thus silenced, Tom felt more at ease,  
And went with his comrades the apples to seize;  
He blamed and protested, but joined in the plan:  
He shared in the plunder, but pitied the man.



THE  
MORNING DREAM.

'Twas in the glad season of spring,  
 Asleep at the dawn of the day,  
 I dreamed what I cannot but sing,  
 So pleasant it seemed as I lay.  
 I dreamed that on ocean afloat,  
 Far hence to the westward I failed,  
 While the billows high-lifted the boat,  
 And the fresh-blowing breeze never failed.

In the steerage a woman I saw,  
 Such at least was the form that she wore,  
 Whose beauty impressed me with awe,  
 Ne'er taught me by woman before.  
 She sat, and a shield at her side  
 Shed light, like a sun on the waves,  
 And smiling divinely, she cried—  
 “ I go to make Freemen of Slaves.”—

Then raising her voice to a strain  
The sweetest, that ear ever heard,  
She sung of the slave's broken chain,  
Wherever her glory appeared.  
Some clouds, which had over us hung,  
Fled, chased by her melody clear,  
And methought while she liberty sung,  
'Twas liberty only to hear.

Thus swiftly dividing the flood,  
To a slave-cultured island we came,  
Where a demon, her enemy, stood—  
Oppression his terrible name.  
In his hand, as the sign of his sway,  
A scourge hung with lashes he bore,  
And stood looking out for his prey  
From Africa's sorrowful shore.

But soon as approaching the land  
That goddess-like woman he viewed,  
The scourge he let fall from his hand,  
With blood of his subjects imbrued.

I saw him both sicken and die,  
And the moment the monster expired,  
Heard shouts, that ascended the sky,  
From thousands with rapture inspired.

Awaking, how could I but muse  
At what such a dream should betide?  
But soon my ear caught the glad news,  
Which served my weak thought for a guide—  
That Britannia, renowned o'er the waves  
For the hatred, she ever has shown,  
To the black-sceptered rulers of slaves,  
Resolves to have none of her own.

THE  
NIGHTINGALE AND GLOW-WORM.

A NIGHTINGALE, that all day long  
Had cheered the village with his song,  
Nor yet at eve his note suspended,  
Nor yet when eventide was ended,  
Began to feel, as well he might,  
The keen demands of appetite;  
When, looking eagerly around,  
He spied far off, upon the ground,  
A something shining in the dark,  
And knew the glow-worm by his spark;  
So, stooping down from hawthorn top,  
He thought to put him in his crop.  
The worm, aware of his intent,  
Harangued him thus, right eloquent—  
Did you admire my lamp, quoth he,  
As much as I your minstrelsy,  
You would abhor to do me wrong,  
As much as I to spoil your song;  
For 'twas the self-same power divine  
Taught you to sing, and me to shine;



That you with music, I with light,  
Might beautify and cheer the night.

The songster heard his short oration,  
And warbling out his approbation,  
Released him, as my story tells,  
And found a supper somewhere else.

Hence jarring sectaries may learn  
Their real interest to discern ;  
That brother should not war with brother,  
And worry and devour each other ;  
But sing and shine by sweet consent,  
Till life's poor transient night is spent,  
Respecting in each other's case  
The gifts of nature and of grace.

Those Christians best deserve the name,  
Who studiously make peace their aim ;  
Peace, both the duty and the prize  
Of him that creeps and him that flies.

## ON A GOLDFINCH

STARVED TO DEATH IN HIS CAGE.

### I.

TIME was when I was free as air,  
The thistles downy feed my fare,  
My drink the morning dew;  
I perched at will on every spray,  
My form genteel, my plumage gay,  
My strains for ever new.

### II.

But gaudy plumage, sprightly strain,  
And form genteel, were all in vain,  
And of a transient date;  
For caught and caged, and starved to death,  
In dying sighs my little breath  
Soon passed the wiry grate.

### III.

Thanks, gentle swain, for all my woes,  
And thanks for this effectual close,  
And cure of every ill!  
More cruelty could none express;  
And I, if you had shown me less,  
Had been your prisoner still.

THE  
PINE-APPLE AND THE BEE.

THE pine-apples, in triple row,  
Were basking hot, and all in blow;  
A bee of most discerning taste  
Perceived the fragrance as he passed,  
On eager wing the spoiler came,  
And searched for crannies in the frame,  
Urged his attempt on every side,  
To every pane his trunk applied;  
But still in vain, the frame was tight,  
And only pervious to the light:  
Thus having wasted half the day,  
He trimmed his flight another way.

Methinks, I said, in thee I find  
The sin and madness of mankind.  
To joys forbidden man aspires,  
Consumes his soul with vain desires,  
Folly the spring of his pursuit,  
And disappointment all the fruit,  
While Cynthia ogles, as she passes,  
The nymph between two chariot glasses,

She is the pine-apple, and he  
The filly unsuccessful bee.  
The maid, who views with pensive air  
The show-glass fraught with glittering ware,  
Sees watches, bracelets, rings, and lockets,  
But sighs at thought of empty pockets;  
Like thine, her appetite is keen,  
But ah, the cruel glass between!

Our dear delights are often such,  
Exposed to view, but not to touch;  
The sight our foolish heart inflames,  
We long for pine-apples in frames;  
With hopeles wish one looks and lingers;  
One breaks the glass, and cuts his fingers;  
But they whom truth and wisdom lead,  
Can gather honey from a weed.



**HORACE. Book the 2d. ODE the 10th.**

**I.**

RECEIVE, dear friend, the truths I teach,  
So shalt thou live beyond the reach  
Of adverse Fortune's power;  
Not always tempt the distant deep,  
Nor always timorously creep  
Along the treacherous shore.

**II.**

He, that holds fast the golden mean,  
And lives contentedly between  
The little and the great,  
Feels not the wants, that pinch the poor,  
Nor plagues, that haunt the rich man's door,  
Imbittering all his state.

**III.**

The tallest pines feel most the power  
Of wintry blasts; the loftiest tower  
Comes heaviest to the ground;  
The bolts, that spare the mountain's side,  
His cloud-capt eminence divide,  
And spread the ruin round.

## IV.

The well informed philosopher  
Rejoices with an wholesome fear,  
And hopes, in spite of pain ;  
If winter bellow from the north,  
Soon the sweet spring comes dancing forth,  
And nature laughs again.

## V.

What if thine heaven be overcast,  
The dark appearance will not last ;  
Expect a brighter sky.  
The God, that strings the silver bow,  
Awakes sometimes the muses too,  
And lays his arrows by.

## VI

If hindrances obstruct thy way,  
Thy magnanimity display,  
And let thy strength be seen ;  
But oh ! if Fortune fill thy sail  
With more than a propitious gale,  
Take half thy canvass in.

## A REFLECTION

ON THE FOREGOING ODE.

AND is this all? Can reason do no more  
Than bid me shun the deep, and dread the shore?  
Sweet moralist! afloat on life's rough sea,  
The Christian has an art unknown to thee.  
He holds no parley with unmanly fears;  
Where duty bids he confidently steers,  
Faces a thousand dangers at her call,  
And, trusting in his God, surmounts them all.

## THE LILY AND THE ROSE.

### I.

THE nymph must lose her female friend,  
If more admired than she—  
But where will fierce contention end,  
If flowers can disagree?

### II.

Within the garden's peaceful scene  
Appeared two lovely foes,  
Aspiring to the rank of queen,  
The Lily and the Rose.

### III.

The Rose soon reddened into rage,  
And, swelling with disdain,  
Appealed to many a poet's page  
To prove her right to reign.

### IV.

The Lily's height bespoke command,  
A fair imperial flower;  
She seemed designed for Flora's hand,  
The sceptre of her power.



## V.

This civil bickering and debate  
The goddesses chanced to hear,  
And flew to save, ere yet too late,  
The pride of the parterre;

## VI.

Yours is, she said, the nobler hue,  
And yours the statelier mien;  
And, till a third surpasses you,  
Let each be deemed a queen.

## VII.

Thus, soothed and reconciled, each seeks,  
The fairest British fair:  
The seat of empire is her cheeks,  
They reign united there.

## IDEM LATINE REDDITUM.

HEU inimicitias quoties parit æmula forma,  
 Quam raro pulchræ pulchra placere potest?  
 Sed fines ultrà solitos discordia tendit,  
 Cum flores ipsos bilis et ira movent.

## II.

Hortus ubi dulces præbet tacitosque recessûs,  
 Se rapit in partes gens animosa duas;  
 Hic sibi regales Amaryllis candida cultûs,  
 Illic purpureo vindicat ore Rosa.

## III.

Ira Rosam et meritis quæsitâ superbia tangunt,  
 Multaque ferventi vix cohibenda sinû,  
 Dum sibi fautorum ciet undique nomina vatûm,  
 Jusque suum, multo carmine fulta, probat.

## IV.

Altior emicat illa, et celso vertice nutat,  
 Ceu flores inter non habitura parem,  
 Fastiditque alios, et nata videtur in usûs  
 Imperii, sceptrum, Flora quod ipsa gerat.

## V.

Nec Dea non senfit civilis murmura rixæ,  
 Cui curæ est pictas pandere ruris opes.  
 Deliciasque suas nunquam non prompta tueri,  
 Dum licet et locus est, ut tueatur, adest.

## VI.

Et tibi forma datur procerior omnibus, inquit,  
 Et tibi, principibus qui solet esse, color,  
 Et donec vincat quædam formosior ambas,  
 Et tibi reginæ nomen, et esto tibi.

## VII.

His ubi sedatus furor est, petit utraque nympham,  
 Qualem inter Veneres Anglia sola parit;  
 Hanc penés imperium est, nihil optant amplius, hujus  
 Regnant in nitidis, et sine lite, genis.

## THE POPLAR FIELD.

THE poplars are felled, farewell to the shade,  
 And the whispering sound of the cool colonade;  
 The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,  
 Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed, since I last took a view  
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew;  
And now in the grass behold they are laid,  
And the tree is my seat, that once lent me a shade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,  
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,  
And the scene, where his melody charmed me before,  
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,  
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,  
With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,  
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if any thing can,  
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man;  
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,  
Have a being less durable even than he\*.

\* Mr. Cowper afterwards altered this last stanza in the following manner:—

The change both my heart and my fancy employs,  
I reflect on the frailty of man, and his joys;  
Short-lived as we are, yet our pleasures, we see,  
Have a still shorter date, and die sooner than we.



## IDEM LATINE REDDITUM.

POPULÆ cecidit gratissima copia silvæ,  
 Conticuere fufurri, omnisque evanuit umbra.  
 Nullæ jam levibus se mifcent frondibus auræ,  
 Et nulla in fluvio ramorum ludit imago.

Hei mihi ! bis fenos dum luētū torqueor annos  
 His cogor filvis fuetoque carere recessū,  
 Cum serò rediens, stratasque in gramine cernens  
 Infedi arboribus, sub quæis errare solebam.

Ah ubi nunc merulæ cāntus ? Felicior illum  
 Silva tegit, duræ nondum permiffa bipenni ;  
 Scilicet exuftos colles camposque patentes  
 Odit, et indignans et non rediturus abivit.

Sed qui fuccifas doleo fuccidar et ipfe,  
 Et priùs huic parilis quàm creverit altera filva  
 Flebor, et, exequiis parvis donatus, habebo  
 Defixum lapidem tumulique cubantis acervum.

Tam subito periisse videns tam digna manere,  
 Agnosco humanas sortes et tristia fata—  
 Sit licet ipse brevis, volucrique simillimus umbræ,  
 Est homini brevior citiusque obitura voluptas.

## VOTUM.

O MATUTINI rores, auræque salubres,  
 O nemora, et lætæ rivis felicibus herbæ,  
 Graminei colles, et amænæ in vallibus umbræ!  
 Fata modò dederint quas olim in rure paterno  
 Delicias, procul arte, procul formidine novi,  
 Quam vellem ignotus, quod mens mea semper  
     avebat,  
 Ante larem proprium placidam expectare senectam,  
 Tum demùm, exactis non infeliciter annis,  
 Sortiri tacitum lapidem, aut sub cespite condi!

## CICINDELA.

BY VINCENT BOURNE.

SUB sepe exiguum est, nec rarò in margine ripæ,  
 Reptile, quod lucet nocte, dieque latet,  
 Vermis habet speciem, sed habet de lumine Nomen;  
 At priscâ à famâ non liquet, unde micet.  
 Plerique à caudâ credunt procedere lumen;  
 Nec desunt, credunt qui rutilare caput.  
 Nam superas stellas quæ nox accendit, et illi  
 Parcam eadem Lucem dat, moduloque parem.  
 Forsitan hoc prudens voluit Natura caveri,  
 Ne pede quis duro reptile contereret:  
 Exiguam, in tenebris ne gressum offenderet ullus,  
 Prætendi voluit forsitan Illa facem  
 Sive usum hunc Natura parens seu maluit illum  
 Haud frustra accensa est Lux, radiique dati.  
 Ponite vos fastus, humiles nec spernite, magni;  
 Quando habet et minimum reptile, quod niteat.

## I. THE GLOW-WORM.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

### I.

BENEATH the hedge, or near the stream,  
A worm is known to stray;  
That shows by night a lucid beam,  
Which disappears by day.

### II.

Disputes have been, and still prevail,  
From whence his rays proceed;  
Some give that honour to his tail,  
And others to his head.

### III.

But this is sure—the hand of might,  
That kindles up the skies,  
Gives *him* a modicum of light  
Proportioned to his size.

### IV.

Perhaps indulgent nature meant,  
By such a lamp bestowed,  
To bid the traveller, as he went,  
Be careful where he trod:



## V.

Nor crush a worm, whose useful light  
Might serve, however small,  
To shew a stumbling stone by night,  
And save him from a fall.

## VI.

Whate'er she meant, this truth divine  
Is legible and plain,  
'Tis power almighty bids him shine,  
Nor bids him shine in vain.

## VII.

Ye proud and wealthy, let this theme  
Teach humbler thoughts to you,  
Since such a reptile has its gem,  
And boasts its splendour too.

## CORNICULA.

BY VINGENT BOURNE.

Nigras inter aves avis est, quæ plurima turre,  
 Antiquas ædes, celsaque Fana colit.  
 Nil tam sublime est, quod non audace volatu,  
 Aeriis spernens inferiora, petit.  
 Quo nemo ascendat, cui non vertigo cerebrum  
 Corripiat, certè hunc feligit illa locum.  
 Quo vix à terrâ tu suspicis absque tremore,  
 Illa metûs expers incolumisque sedet.  
 Lamina delubri supra fastigia, ventus  
 Quâ cœli spiret de regione, docet;  
 Hanc ea præ reliquis mavult, secura pericli,  
 Nec curat, nedum cogitat, unde cadat.  
 Res inde humanas, sed summa per otia, spectat,  
 Et nihil ad sese, quas videt, esse videt.  
 Concurfus spectat, plateâque negotia in omni,  
 Omnia pro nugis at sapienter habet.  
 Clamores, quas infra audit, si forsitan audit,  
 Pro rebus nihili negligit, & crocitat.  
 Ille tibi invideat, felix Cornicula, pennas,  
 Qui sic humanis rebus abesse velit.

## II. THE JACKDAW.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

### I.

THERE is a bird who by his coat,  
And by the hoarseness of his note,  
Might be supposed a crow ;  
A great frequenter of the church,  
Where bishop-like he finds a perch,  
And dormitory too.

### II.

Above the steeple shines a plate,  
That turns and turns, to indicate  
From what point blows the weather.  
Look up—your brains begin to swim,  
'Tis in the clouds—that pleases him,  
He chooses it the rather.

### III.

Fond of the speculative height,  
Thither he wings his airy flight,  
And thence securely sees  
The bustle and the rareeflow,  
That occupy mankind below,  
Secure and at his ease.

## IV.

You think, no doubt, he sits and muses  
On future broken bones and bruises,  
If he should chance to fall.  
No; not a single thought like that  
Employs his philosophic pate,  
Or troubles it at all.

## V.

He sees that this great roundabout  
The world, with all its motley rout,  
Church, army, phyfic, law,  
Its customs, and its bufinesses,  
Is no concern at all of his,  
And says—what says he?—Caw.

## VI.

Thrice happy bird! I too have seen  
Much of the vanities of men;  
And, sick of having seen 'em,  
Would cheerfully these limbs resign  
For such a pair of wings as thine,  
And such a head between 'em.



AD GRILLUM  
ANACREONTICUM.

BY VINCENT BOURNE,

I.

O qui meæ culinæ  
Argutulus Choraules,  
Et Hospes es canorus,  
Quacunque commoreris,  
Felicittatis omen;  
Jucundiore cantu  
Siquando me salutes,  
Et ipse te rependam,  
Et ipse, quâ valebo,  
Remunerabo musâ.

II.

Dicêris innocensque  
Et gratus inquilinus;  
Nec viçtitans rapinis,  
Ut forices voraces,  
Muresve curiosi,  
Furumque delicatum  
Vulgus domesticorum;  
Sed tutus in camini

Recessibus, quiete  
Contentus & calore.

## III.

Beatior Cicadâ,  
Quæ te referre formâ,  
Quæ voce te videtûr;  
Et saltitans per herbas,  
Unius, haud secundæ,  
Æstatis est Chorista:  
Tu carmen integratum  
Reponis ad Decembrem,  
Lætus per universum  
Incontinenter annum.

## IV.

Te nulla Lux relinquit,  
Te nulla nox revisit,  
Non Musicæ vacantem,  
Curisve non solutum:  
Quin amplius canendo,  
Quin amplius fruendo,  
Ætatulam, vel omni,  
Quam nos Homunciones  
Absumimus querendo,  
Ætate longiorem.

### III. THE CRICKET.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

#### I.

LITTLE inmate, full of mirth,  
Chirping on my kitchen hearth,  
Whereſoe'er be thine abode,  
Always harbinger of good,  
Pay me for thy warm retreat  
With a ſong more ſoft and ſweet;  
In return thou ſhalt receive  
Such a ſtrain as I can give.

#### II.

Thus thy praise ſhall be expreſt,  
Inoffenſive, welcome gueſt!  
While the rat is on the ſcout,  
And the mouſe with curious ſnout,  
With what vermin elſe infeſt  
Every diſh, and ſpoil the beſt;  
Friſking thus before the fire,  
Thou haſt all thine heart's deſire.

## III.

Though in voice and shape they be  
Formed as if akin to thee,  
Thou surpassest, happier far,  
Happiest grasshoppers that are;  
Theirs is but a summer's song,  
Thine endures the winter long,  
Unimpaired, and shrill, and clear,  
Melody throughout the year.

## IV.

Neither night, nor dawn of day,  
Puts a period to thy play:  
Sing then—and extend thy span  
Far beyond the date of man.  
Wretched man, whose years are spent  
In repining discontent,  
Lives not, aged though he be,  
Half a span, compared with thee.



## SIMILE AGIT IN SIMILE.

BY VINCENT BOURNE.

Christatus, pictisque ad Thaida Psittacus alis,  
 Missus ab Eoo munus amante venit.  
 Ancillis mandat primam formare loquelam,  
 Archididascaliæ dat sibi Thais opus.  
 Psittace, ait Thais, fingitque sonantia molle  
 Basia, quæ docilis molle refingit Avis.  
 Jam captat, jam dimidiat Tyrunculus; & jam  
 Integrat auditos articulatque sonos.  
 Psittace mi pulcher pulchelle, Hera dicit alumno;  
 Psittace mi pulcher, reddit alumnus Heræ.  
 Jamque canit, ridet, deciesque ægrotat in horâ,  
 Et vocat ancillâs nomine quamque suo.  
 Multaque scurratur mendax, & multa jocatur,  
 Et lepidò populum detinet augurio.  
 Nunc tremulum illudet Fratrem, qui suspicit, & Pol  
 Carnalis, quisquis te docet, inquit, Homo est;  
 Argutæ nunc stridet anus argutulus instar;  
 Respicit, & nebulo es, quisquis es, inquis Anus.  
 Quando fuit melior Tyro, meliorve Magistra!  
 Quando duo ingeniis tam coiere pares!  
 Ardua discenti nulla est, res nulla docenti  
 Ardua; cum doceat Fæmina, discat Avis.

## IV. THE PARROT.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

### I.

In painted plumes superbly drest,  
A native of the gorgeous east,  
By many a billow tost;  
Poll gains at length the British shore,  
Part of the captain's precious store,  
A present to his toast.

### II.

Belinda's maids are soon preferred  
To teach him now and then a word,  
As Poll can master it;  
But 'tis her own important charge  
To qualify him more at large,  
And make him quite a wit.

### III.

Sweet Poll ! his doating mistress cries,  
Sweet Poll ! the mimic bird replies,  
And calls aloud for sack.

She next instructs him in the kifs;  
'Tis now a little one, like Mifs;  
And now a hearty smack.

## IV.

At first he aims at what he hears;  
And, listening close with both his ears,  
Just catches at the sound;  
But soon articulates aloud,  
Much to the amusement of the crowd,  
And stuns the neighbours round.

## V.

A querulous old woman's voice  
His humorous talent next employs,  
He scolds and gives the lie.  
And now he sings, and now is sick,  
Here Sally, Susan, come, come quick,  
Poor Poll is like to die!

## VI.

Belinda and her bird! 'tis rare  
To meet with such a well matched pair,  
The language and the tone,  
Each character in every part  
Sustained with so much grace and art,  
And both in unison.

## VII.

When children first begin to spell,  
And stammer out a syllable,

    We think them tedious creatures;  
But difficulties soon abate,  
When birds are to be taught to prate,  
    And women are the teachers.



TRANSLATION OF  
PRIOR'S  
CHLOE, AND EUPHELIA.

I.

MERCATOR, vigiles oculos ut fallere possit,  
    Nomine sub ficto trans mare mittit opes;  
Lené sonat liquidumque meis Euphelia chordis,  
    Sed solam exoptant te, mea vota, Chlœe.

II.

Ad speculum ornabat nitidos Euphelia crines,  
    Cum dixit mea lux, heus, cave, fume lyram.  
Namque lyram juxtâ positam cum carmine vidit,  
    Suave quidem carmen dulcisonamque lyram,

III.

Fila lyræ vocemque paro, suspiria surgunt,  
    Et miscent numeris murmura mæsta meis,  
Dumque tuæ memoro laudes, Euphelia, formæ,  
    Tota anima intereâ pendet ab ore Chlœes.

IV.

Subrubet illa pudore, et contrahit altera frontem,  
    Me torquet mea mens conscia, psallo, tremo;  
Atque Cupidineâ dixit Dea cincta corona,  
    Heu! fallendi artem quam didicere parum.

THE  
DIVERTING HISTORY  
OF  
JOHN GILPIN;

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE  
INTENDED, AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN.

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen  
Of credit and renown,  
A train-band captain eke was he  
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,  
Though wedded we have been  
These twice ten tedious years, yet we  
No holiday have seen.

To-morrow is our wedding day,  
And we will then repair  
Unto the Bell at Edmonton  
All in a chaise and pair.

My sister, and my sister's child,  
Myself and children three,  
Will fill the chaise; so you must ride  
On horseback after we.

He soon replied, I do admire  
Of womankind but one,  
And you are she, my dearest dear,  
Therefore it shall be done.

I am a linen-draper bold,  
As all the world doth know,  
And my good friend the calender  
Will lend his horse to go.

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin, That's well said;  
And for that wine is dear,  
We will be furnished with our own,  
Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kissed his loving wife;  
O'erjoyed was he to find  
That, though on pleasure she was bent,  
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,  
But yet was not allowed  
To drive up to the door, lest all  
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stayed,  
Where they did all get in;  
Six precious souls, and all agog  
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,  
Were never folk so glad,  
The stones did rattle underneath  
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side  
Seized fast the flowing mane  
And up he got, in haste to ride,  
But soon came down again;



For saddle-tree scarce reached had he,  
His journey to begin,  
When, turning round his head, he saw  
Three customers come in.

So down he came; for loss of time,  
Although it grieved him sore,  
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,  
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers  
Were suited to their mind,  
When Betty screaming came down stairs,  
“The wine is left behind!”

Good lack! quoth he—yet bring it me,  
My leathern belt likewise,  
In which I bear my trusty sword  
When I do exercise.

Now mistress Gilpin (careful soul!)  
Had two stone bottles found,  
To hold the liquor that she loved,  
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,  
Through which the belt he drew,  
And hung a bottle on each side,  
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be  
Equipped from top to toe,  
His long red cloak, well brushed and neat,  
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again  
Upon his nimble steed,  
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,  
With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smoother road  
Beneath his well-shod feet,  
The snorting beast began to trot,  
Which galled him in his seat.

So, Fair and softly, John he cried,  
But John he cried in vain;  
That trot became a gallop soon,  
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must  
Who cannot sit upright,  
He grasped the mane with both his hands,  
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that fort  
Had handled been before,  
What thing upon his back had got  
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought;  
Away went hat and wig;  
He little dreamt when he set out,  
Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,  
Like streamer long and gay,  
Till, loop and button failing both,  
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern  
The bottles he had flung;  
A bottle swinging at each side,  
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children screamed,  
Up flew the windows all;  
And every soul cried out, Well done!  
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he?  
His fame soon spread around,  
He carries weight! he rides a race!  
'Tis for a thousand pound!

And still, as fast as he drew near,  
'Twas wonderful to view  
How in a trice the turnpike men  
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down  
His reeking head full low,  
The bottles twain behind his back  
Were shattered at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,  
Most piteous to be seen,  
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke  
As they had basted been.



But still he seemed to carry weight,  
With leathern girdle braced;  
For all might see the bottle-necks  
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington  
These gambols he did play,  
Until he came unto the Wash  
Of Edmonton so gay,

And there he threw the wash about  
On both sides of the way,  
Just like unto a trundling mop,  
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife  
From the balcony spied  
Her tender husband, wondering much  
To see how he did ride.

Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house—  
They all aloud did cry;  
The dinner waits, and we are tired:  
Said Gilpin—So am I!

But yet his horse was not a whit  
Inclined to tarry there;  
For why?—his owner had a house  
Full ten miles off at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,  
Shot by an archer strong;  
So did he fly—which brings me to  
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin out of breath,  
And fore against his will,  
Till at his friend the calender's  
His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amazed to see  
His neighbour in such trim,  
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,  
And thus accosted him:

What news? what news? your tidings tell;  
Tell me you must and shall—  
Say why bare-headed you are come,  
Or why you come at all?

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,  
And loved a timely joke!  
And thus unto the calender  
In merry guise he spoke:

I came because your horse would come;  
And, if I well forebode,  
My hat and wig will soon be here,  
They are upon the road.

The calender, right glad to find  
His friend in merry pin,  
Returned him not a single word,  
But to the house went in;

Whence straight he came with hat and wig;  
A wig that flowed behind,  
A hat not much the worse for wear,  
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn  
Thus showed his ready wit,  
My head is twice as big as your's,  
They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away,  
That hangs upon your face;  
And stop and eat, for well you may  
Be in a hungry case.

Said John, it is my wedding-day,  
And all the world would stare  
If wife should dine at Edmonton,  
And I should dine at Ware.

So turning to his horse, he said,  
I am in haste to dine;  
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,  
You shall go back for mine.

Ah luckless speech, and bootless boast!  
For which he paid full dear;  
For, while he spake, a braying ass  
Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he  
Had heard a lion roar,  
And galloped off with all his might,  
As he had done before.



Away went Gilpin, and away  
Went Gilpin's hat and wig :  
He lost them sooner than at first,  
For why?—they were too big.

Now mistress Gilpin, when she saw  
Her husband posting down  
Into the country far away,  
She pulled out half a crown ;

And thus unto the youth she said,  
That drove them to the Bell,  
This shall be your's when you bring back  
My husband safe and well.

The youth did ride, and soon did meet  
John coming back amain !  
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,  
By catching at his rein ;

But not performing what he meant,  
And gladly would have done,  
The frightened steed he frightened more,  
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away  
Went post-boy at his heels,  
The post-boy's horse right glad to miss  
The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road  
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,  
With post-boy scampering in the rear,  
They raised the hue and cry:—

Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!  
Not one of them was mute;  
And all and each that passed that way  
Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again  
Flew open in short space;  
The toll-men thinking as before  
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,  
For he got first to town;  
Nor stopped till where he had got up  
He did again get down.

Now let us sing, long live the king,  
And Gilpin, long live he;  
And, when he next doth ride abroad,  
May I be there to see!

AN EPISTLE

TO

A PROTESTANT LADY IN FRANCE.

MADAM,

A STRANGER's purpose in these lays  
Is to congratulate, and not to praise.  
To give the creature her Creator's due  
Were sin in me, and an offence to you.  
From man to man, or ev'n to woman paid,  
Praise is the medium of a knavish trade,  
A coin by craft for folly's use designed,  
Spurious, and only current with the blind.

The path of sorrow, and that path alone,  
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown;  
No traveller ever reached that blest abode,  
Who found not thorns and briars in his road.  
The world may dance along the flowery plain,  
Cheered as they go by many a sprightly strain,  
Where Nature has her mossy velvet spread,  
With unshod feet they yet securely tread,



Admonished, scorn the caution and the friend,  
Bent upon pleasure, heedless of its end.  
But he, who knew what human hearts would prove,  
How slow to learn the dictates of his love,  
That hard by nature and of stubborn will,  
A life of ease would make them harder still,  
In pity to the sinners he designed  
To rescue from the ruins of mankind,  
Called for a cloud to darken all their years,  
And said, "Go spend them in the vale of tears."  
Oh balmy gales of soul-reviving air,  
Oh salutary streams that murmur there,  
These flowing from the fount of grace above,  
Those breathed from lips of everlasting love!  
The flinty soil indeed their feet annoys,  
And sudden sorrow nips their springing joys,  
An envious world will interpose its frown  
To mar delights superior to its own,  
And many a pang, experienced still within,  
Reminds them of their hated inmate, sin;  
But ills of every shape and every name  
Transformed to blessings miss their cruel aim,  
And every moment's calm, that sooths the breast,  
Is given in earnest of eternal rest.

IV.

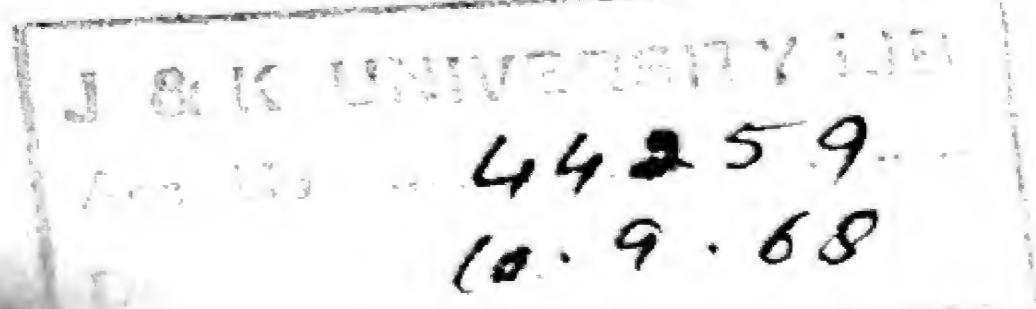
Not rich, I render what I may,  
 I feize thy name in haste,  
 And place it in this first essay,  
 Left this should prove the last.  
 'Tis where it should be—in a plan,  
 That holds in view the good of man.

V.

The poet's lyre, to fix his fame,  
 Should be the poet's heart;  
 Affection lights a brighter flame  
 Than ever blazed by art.  
 No muses on these lines attend,  
 I sink the poet in the friend.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

T. Bensley, Printer, Bolt Court, Fleet Street, London.



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